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ABSTRACT

The 17 papers in this collection all deal with 20th-century journalism, journalists, and mass media. The papers and their authors are: "Building One's Own Gallows: The Trade Publications' Reaction to a Federal Shield Law, 1972-1974" (Karla Gower); "The Useful Ogre: Sweden's Use and Views of American Television, 1956-62" (Ulf Jonas Bjork); "Black or Negro? The Media's Dilemma of Racial Identifiers, 1967-1971" (Joey Senat); "Hostile Crowds, Homosexual Activists and AIDS Victims: Mainstream Newspapers Cover Gay Liberation" (Elizabeth M. Koehler); "Unhappy Events in Ireland: Irish-American Press Coverage of Dublin's 1916 Easter Rising" (Karen Patricia Potter); "'They're Talking about Us': Yellow Journalism and the Press of West Africa" (W. Joseph Campbell); "Same/Difference: The Media, Equal Rights and Aboriginal Women in Canada, 1968" (Barbara M. Freeman); "Literature, Propaganda and the First World War: The Case of 'Blackwood's Magazine'" (David Finkelstein); "Reasoned Protest and Personal Journalism: The Liberty and Death of 'The Intermountain Observer'" (James B. McPherson); "Measuring Jazz Journalism in Missouri Dailies of the 1920s" (Steven D. Koski); "Fighting for 'The Big Voices of the Air': A History of the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service"; "Rural Publicity in the Boilerplate Era: The Mt. Clemens News Bureau" (James C. Foust); "The Delightful Relationship: Presidents and White House Correspondents in the 1920s" (Stephen Ponder); "Construction of a Gay Image in the Washington Press: 1943-1970" (Edward M. Alwood); "Balancing Academic Freedom and Academic Image: The North Carolina Speaker Ban, 1963-1968" (Patricia Richardson); "The Vietnam War, the Cold War, and Protestants: How the 'Christian Century' and 'Christianity Today' Reflected American Society in the 1960s" (David E. Settje); and "News Pegs and the National Farmers Organization: Episodic and Life-Span Patterns of Press Coverage" (Jane S. McConnell). (NKA)

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BUILDING ONE'S OWN GALLOWS:
THE TRADE PUBLICATIONS' REACTION TO A FEDERAL SHIELD LAW, 1972–1974

by

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BUILDING ONE'S OWN GALLOWS: THE TRADE PUBLICATIONS' REACTION TO A FEDERAL SHIELD LAW, 1972–1974

Abstract

In 1972, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Branzburg v. Hayes* that the First Amendment granted journalists no special privilege to protect confidential sources and information. The decision was met with widespread outrage from the press. Media organizations and associations quickly mobilized to lobby Congress for a federal privilege statute or shield law.

The flurry of activity in Congress generated by the *Branzburg* decision soon fizzled out as the immensity of the task at hand became apparent. How should the press be defined? Who should be considered a journalist? Should it be a qualified or an absolute privilege? Unable to satisfy everyone, congressional efforts to forge a shield law for journalists died in 1974. Scholars have since blamed the media for allowing the bill to falter, arguing that journalists themselves could not agree on what they wanted. This paper examines the reaction of the leading trade publications, *Editor & Publisher*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, and *The Quill*, to the issue of a federal journalist's privilege law from 1972 to 1974.

Although it is impossible to say whether the federal shield law initiative failed because of the inability of the press to agree on anything as scholars have maintained, it is clear that the likelihood of a shield law gaining the support of the press was highest in the first year after the *Branzburg* decision, when emotions were running high. The longer Congress took to act on the matter, the more reporters were inclined to resist such a law.

BUILDING ONE'S OWN GALLOWS:
THE TRADE PUBLICATIONS' REACTION TO A FEDERAL SHIELD LAW, 1972–1974

"What the Supreme Court declined to do, Congress must do—protect the confidentiality of newsmen's sources," cried the trade publication *Editor & Publisher*[1] after the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in June 1972 that journalists have no greater right than average citizens when it comes to appearing before grand juries. According to the Court in *Branzburg v. Hayes*,[2] the First Amendment granted journalists no special privilege to protect confidential sources and information. As can be seen from the reaction of the *Editor & Publisher*, the decision was met with widespread outrage from the press. Media organizations and associations quickly mobilized to lobby Congress for a federal privilege statute or shield law.[3]

The question of journalists' privilege for confidential sources was not a new one.[4] The first privilege bill was introduced into Congress as early as

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[1] "Newsmen's Privilege," *Editor & Publisher*, 8 July 1972, 6.

[2] 408 U.S. 665, 92 S. Ct. 2646, 33 L. Ed. 2d 626 (1972).

[3] Maurice Van Gerpen, *Privileged Communication and The Press: The Citizen's Right to Know Versus the Law's Right to Confidential News Source Evidence* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979), 147; "Newsmen's privilege ban revives bills in Congress," *Editor & Publisher*, 8 July 1972, 11; and "Newsman's Privilege Remains an Issue," *The Quill*, August 1972, 30.

[4] Donald M. Gillmor and others, *Mass Communication Law: Cases and Comment*, 5th ed., (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1990) 358. Gillmor states that for at least 100 years reporters and editors had argued that compelled testimony not only chills newsgathering but also violates their employer's rules and violates professional codes of journalism ethics. Tonda Rush, "Shield Laws," in *The Press and The State: Sociohistorical and Contemporary Studies*, ed. Walter M. Brasch and Dana R. Ulloth (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), 675–676. Rush reviews cases dating back to the trial of Peter Zenger in which reporters have refused to reveal their sources.

1929, and similar measures had been periodically introduced since then. In fact, several such bills were still waiting, after a year, to be acted upon by the judiciary committees to which they had been referred, when the *Branzburg* decision was announced.[5]

But the *Branzburg* ruling brought with it a heightened sense of urgency. Between the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago and the Watergate scandal of the early 1970s, "a cloudburst of subpoenas showered the press," according to Donald Gillmor.[6] An editor of the *Los Angeles Times* told a subcommittee of the judiciary committee of the U.S. Senate that his paper had been served with more than thirty subpoenas and threatened with more than fifty others during the preceding few years. CBS and NBC received 121 subpoenas in a thirty-month period, and a reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times* was subpoenaed in eleven separate proceedings in eighteen months.[7] This rise in the use of subpoenas during the early 1970s was the result of the combination of the tumultuous times, the press' emphasis on investigative reporting, the press' practice of using confidential sources as the basis for stories, and the Nixon administration's desire to maintain law and order in an increasingly fragile and unstable society.[8]

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[5] Van Gerpen, 147. Van Gerpen suggests that the judiciary committees were waiting for the Supreme Court's decision before acting. "Newsmen's privilege ban," 11.

[6] Gillmor, 359.

[7] Victoria Cook, *Shield Laws: A Report on Freedom of the Press, Protection of News Sources, and the Obligation to Testify* (Lexington, KY: The Council of State Governments, 1973), 3.

[8] Van Gerpen, 29–31; Gillmor, 359, 361; Ernest C. Hynds, American Newspapers in the 1970s (New York: Hastings House, Publishers, 1975) 206–208; and "Absolute subpoena immunity held necessary for newsmen," *Editor & Publisher*, 19 February 1972, 24. The article reported the results of a survey of one thousand reporters conducted by Vincent Blasi over a seventeen-month period in 1970 and 1971. Blasi found that more than one-half of the reporters said they relied on regular confidential sources for at least ten percent of their news stories and almost one-seventh relied on regular confidential sources in more than one-half of their stories.

The flurry of activity in Congress generated by the *Branzburg* decision soon fizzled out as the immensity of the task at hand became apparent. How should the press be defined? Who should be considered a journalist? Should it be a qualified or an absolute privilege? Unable, it appeared, to satisfy everyone, congressional efforts to forge a federal shield law for journalists died in 1974. Scholars have since blamed the media for allowing the bill to falter, arguing that journalists themselves could not agree on what they wanted. Some demanded an absolute privilege, while others were willing to accept a qualified one. Still others objected to the idea of a privilege law at all.[9] But just what was the position of the media on this issue? How did the press view itself and its role in 1970s America? This paper will examine the reaction of the leading trade publications, *Editor & Publisher, Columbia Journalism Review*, and *The Quill*, to the issue of a federal journalist's privilege law from 1972 to 1974.[10]

The purpose of the paper is to provide a greater understanding of the period following the *Branzburg* ruling from the press' perspective and of why the federal legislative initiative failed. Through the arguments presented in the trade publications will be gained an understanding of how the press viewed itself and the nature of its role in times of civil unrest. Specifically, this study will seek to answer the following research questions: What was the reaction of *Editor & Publisher, Columbia Journalism Review,* and *The Quill* to the *Branzburg v. Hayes* decision and the subsequent federal law proposals? What themes emerged to support or refute the federal proposals?

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[9] Gillmor, 363; Hynds, 224; Rush, 680; and Van Gerpen, 167.

[10] *Editor & Publisher* is a weekly magazine providing spot news and features about newspapers, advertisers, and agencies. *The Quill* is a monthly magazine devoted to journalism. It is owned and published by the Society of Professional Journalists. *Columbia Journalism Review* is published bimonthly under the auspices of the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University. Its mission is:

> . . . to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service . . .
>
> . . . to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair and decent.

The Press Reacts to *Branzburg*

In June 1972, the Supreme Court ruled in *Branzburg v. Hayes* that journalists did not have a First Amendment right to refuse to disclose confidential sources in the context of grand jury proceedings. Writing for the majority, Justice White rejected the argument that reporters had a constitutional privilege to protect their sources:

> Until now the only testimonial privilege for unofficial witnesses that is rooted in the Federal Constitution is the Fifth Amendment privilege against compelled self-incrimination. We are asked to create another by interpreting the First Amendment to grant newsmen a testimonial privilege that other citizens do not enjoy. This we decline to do. On the records now before us, we perceive no basis for holding that the public interest in law enforcement and in ensuring effective grand jury proceedings is insufficient to override the consequential, but uncertain, burden on news gathering which is said to result from insisting that reporters, like other citizens, respond to relevant questions put to them in the course of a valid grand jury investigation or criminal trial.[11]

Justice White went on to note that: "From the beginning of our country the press has operated without constitutional protection for press informants and the press has flourished."[12]

Editor & Publisher (*E&P*) responded immediately to Justice White's comments:

> Some of the greatest investigative reporting of our times—Pulitzer Prize-winning stories—involved misfeasance in public office, bribery

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[11] 408 U.S. 668–690.

[12] Ibid., 690.

> and crookedness in city and state activities. All of them were about crime, i.e., violation of statutes. If they had not been uncovered by reporters many more of those unsavory conditions would have continued unchecked. If those reporters had not protected their confidential sources under the then 'unwritten law,' most of those stories would never have been written.
>
> Very few more of them will be written in the future, it is almost guaranteed, unless Congress, and the individual states, pass legislation to protect the confidentiality of newsmen's sources.[13]

Apparently, until the *Branzburg v. Hayes* ruling had declared otherwise, journalists had taken it for granted that the First Amendment protected them from having to disclose confidential sources. Being told not only that journalists did not have a First Amendment privilege, but that they had never had one, created a sense of panic at *E&P*, especially in light of the rising use of subpoenas by the Nixon administration. Congress became the only hope of journalists, in the eyes of *E&P*.

Although less emotional in its language, the *Columbia Journalism Review* (*CJR*) took a similar approach. The Supreme Court ruling was, it editorialized, "a costly decision":

> Where do journalists stand now? First, it is clear that for the time being they have little hope of a clear charter of the kind granted in libel and privacy. The most promising avenue now seems to be that of a federal shield law, on which the Court may or may not look kindly. Such bills have been introduced by Sen. Cranston and Reps. Koch and Reid; they deserve support. . . . But such possibilities are chill comfort compared to the hope that has been dashed.[14]

Fred Friendly, writing in the same issue, agreed that "protection must come from those who make laws, not those who interpret laws . . .," but he was less critical of the Supreme Court:

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[13] "Newsmen's Privilege," 6.

[14] "A costly decision," *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October 1972, 2.

> The journalist . . . needs to understand that because he has certain professional privileges he is not a privileged character who is above the law. There are times when the First Amendment clashes with other parts of the Constitution, and it is the courts' responsibility to determine where the balance rests. It may sound heretical for a journalist to utter such thoughts, but every Amendment can't always prevail.[15]

The Quill was more circumspect in its comments. In the August 1972 issue, *The Quill* noted that reaction to the Supreme Court's decision had been both "ample and varied," ranging from "statements like that of Sigma Delta Chi's expressing 'disappointment' and 'apprehension,' to a bill introduced by U.S. Sen. Alan Cranston (D. Calif.) which would give the press congressional immunity from forced disclosure of confidential sources."[16]

Members of Congress had indeed reacted quickly, producing a rash of bills to appease the nervous press. The Cranston bill was introduced to Congress immediately after the Supreme Court announced its decision.[17] Shortly thereafter, U.S. Sen. Sam Ervin told a news group that he too would introduce legislation to protect reporters from being compelled to disclose confidential information and even "criticized the Supreme Court for taking 'a very narrow view in its interpretation of the First Amendment.'"[18] A bill by Sen. James Pearson and Rep. Ogden Reid, however, was preferred by the Freedom of Information Committee of the Associated Press Managing

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[15] Fred Friendly, "Justice White and reporter Caldwell: finding a common ground," *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October 1972, 36.

[16] "Newsmen's Privilege Remains an Issue," *The Quill*, August 1972, 30.

[17] Robert C. Davis, "3 subpoena case reporters uncertain of renewed calls," *Editor & Publisher*, 19 August 1972, 9.

[18] "Senator Ervin plans news confidence bill," *Editor & Publisher*, 5 August 1972, 40.

Editors.[19] For the most part, the difference in the bills put forward was the extent of the privilege to be granted. Both the Ervin and the Pearson-Reid bills provided for a qualified privilege, while the Cranston bill was absolute.

The Press Reacts to a Federal Shield Law

For *E&P*, the question of whether the privilege should be qualified or absolute was the sole issue to be decided. In its first editorial on the subject after its initial comments on the Supreme Court ruling, *E&P* made its position clear:

> Newsmen should not be lulled into endorsing or accepting the proposed Ervin-Pearson bill in the mistaken belief that any legislation designed to protect reporters from forced disclosure of confidential information is better than no legislation.
>
> The qualifications spelled out in the Ervin-Pearson measure are so broad and sweeping that the bill provides no relief whatsoever for reporters who may be called before Federal courts or grand juries to reveal their confidential sources and information. . . .
>
> We feel newsmen and their editors should "go for broke" and demand a bill that actually gives them the right to protect their confidential sources rather than accept a bill that provides some protection with one clause and takes it away with another.[20]

E&P's editorial position was reflected in Luther Huston's article on the hearings by the House judiciary subcommittee on reporter privilege bills. More than twenty bills had been referred to the subcommittee for review. One, the Mondale-Whalen bill, had been drafted by representatives of several media organizations, Huston reported. The American Newspaper Publishers Association, however, was withholding its endorsement of any of the bills. According to the ANPA, as reported by *E&P*, an analysis of the pending bills

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[19] Davis, 9. The Pearson-Reid bill was combined with the Ervin bill to become the Ervin-Pearson bill. See also, "Ervin-Pearson bill qualifies grand jury call," *Editor & Publisher*, 26 August 1972, 26.

[20] "No relief in Ervin-Pearson Bill," *Editor & Publisher*, 2 September 1972, 6.

"clearly show[ed] the complexity of the problem and indicate[d] the need for more preparatory work and study by media organizations to determine what specific legislative language would be most appropriate."[21] But for Huston, any delays were simply the legislative wheels "grinding slowly," deferring the "hopes of newsmen that Congress [would] act to negate the Supreme Court's ruling."[22]

E&P's coverage of the hearings of the House judiciary subcommittee continued in the same vein for the next few months. Five media representatives told the subcommittee that "legislation was not only necessary but passage was imperative to afford protection denied by the Supreme Court." In fact, "'the Supreme Court's decision was a direct blow at the right of the people to be fully informed without hindrance by the government,'" said Robert Fichenberg, chairman of the Freedom of Information Committee, American Society of Newspaper Editors. John Finnegan, spokesperson for the Associated Press Managing Editors Association, repeated the sentiment in calling for a "Free Flow of Information Act." Sigma Delta Chi, the professional journalistic society that has since become the Society of Professional Journalists, also supported such an act because "a free press cannot exist without protection for the reporter and his sources."[23] According to the *E&P* article, only the Assistant U.S. Attorney General Roger Cramton testified to the subcommittee that legislation was unnecessary. The Attorney General's "Guidelines for Subpoenas to the News

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[21] Luther Huston, "Hearings begin September 21 on reporter privilege bills," *Editor & Publisher*, 16 September 1972, 12.

[22] Ibid.

[23] "Newsmen urge passage of press immunity bill," *Editor & Publisher*, 30 September 1972, 12. See also, "Shield bill hearing continues," *Editor & Publisher*, 7 October 1972, 10.

Media" were sufficient protection, he argued. However, such guidelines did not satisfy *E&P*:

> The fact is that the subpoena power still exists and can be used at the whim of the Attorney General, whoever he may be. It is a Sword of Damocles hanging over the head of every investigative reporter. Its use at the federal level is an influence for similar use at the state level.
>
> The right of a newsman to protect his confidential sources and information, which is basically a right exercised on behalf of the public, should be subject only to the rule of law and not to the vagaries of a man or party in office or to subtle changes in political climate.[24]

Neither the hearings nor the Attorney General's guidelines produced much discussion in *The Quill*. As the magazine of Sigma Delta Chi, it was most concerned with that organization's views on the subject and concentrated its reporting on the testimony of Sigma Delta Chi's national president Guy Ryan. "It is," he said, "in the final analysis the public which is the victim." But, unlike the editors at *E&P*, Sigma Delta Chi members were willing to accept a qualified privilege; "not so much for the benefit of the press so much as for benefit of us all."[25]

As hearings on the various shield bills continued, a reporter was jailed for failure to answer grand jury questions that went beyond the reported story. Peter Bridge was the first journalist sent to jail as a result of the *Branzburg* ruling. For *E&P*, the Bridge case was simply a dramatic illustration of the perils of accepting a qualified shield bill, especially since Bridge was supposed to have been protected by a state shield law.[26] But for *the Quill*, it was "a career in jeopardy." After all,

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[24] "Reliance on official restraint," *Editor & Publisher*, 30 September 1972, 6.

[25] "Shield Law Needed, Ryan Tells Subcommittee," *The Quill*, November 1972, 64. See also, "Media Committee Supports Federal Shield Law," *The Quill*, September 1972, 27; "Senators seek to protect newsmen," *The Quill*, September 1972, 33.

> Peter Bridge didn't have to go to jail. He could have been with his wife when their third child was born.
>
> All he had to do was tell the judge information someone had given him in connection with an alleged bribe of a public official. But because he refused to reveal to a grand jury unpublished details of a story he had been reporting for the Newark (N.J.) *News*, he was cited for contempt.[27]

But, ultimately, it would be the public that would suffer,

> through loss of knowledge about the functioning of its own governmental institutions. And the public will continue to suffer until it demands adequate shield legislation which would allow newsmen to protect their sources and keep reporters from being used as an investigative arm of government.[28]

When a second reporter, also from a state with a shield law, was jailed in late 1972 for refusing to divulge sources, *E&P* began to feel the noose tightening and made a dire prediction:

> the once accepted privilege of a newsman to protect his confidential sources will be eroded to complete ineffectiveness. Malfeasance and misfeasance in public office will go unreported because no public-spirited person will dare to tell a reporter what he knows.
>
> The tenor of Supreme Court rulings in this area is such that only broad congressional action will stop the erosion. The role of the press as the watchdog of government will surely disappear unless the newsman's power of independent inquiry is guaranteed and protected by Congress.[29]

In the same issue, *E&P* reported on meetings of both the Associated Press Managing Editors Association (APME) and Sigma Delta Chi. According to *E&P*, the APME was "deeply concerned about the increasing use of contempt powers by the courts to censor the news by seeking to force reporters to divulge confidential sources of information,"[30] while at the Sigma Delta Chi 63rd annual convention, "the flags of press freedom, the public's right to know, and the First Amendment rights of newsmen flew high on the ramparts." *E&P* cheerfully reported Sigma Delta Chi's resolution that there would be "no surrender on the field of battle to preserve and protect the rights of reporters."[31]

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[26] "A qualified confidence bill," *Editor & Publisher*, 14 October 1972, 6.

[27] Charles Long, "A career in jeopardy—Peter Bridge goes to jail," *The Quill*, November 1972, 48.

[28] Ibid., 49.

[29] "The no-confidence laws," *Editor & Publisher*, 25 November 1972, 6.

Despite the positive resolution, however, there was a divergence of views on shield laws among Sigma Delta Chi members. *E&P*, which had tried to limit the issue of shield laws to the question of whether they should be absolute or qualified, glossed over the dissenting arguments under a subhead titled "For absolute privilege." But at the end of the section, *E&P* did report on the "entertaining" speech of Hodding Carter, III, editor of the *Greenville* (Miss.) *Delta Democrat-Times*. For the most part, Carter reiterated the themes already developed by *E&P*—constitutional protections for the press had broken down and the public is the victim. At the end, however, he reminded supporters of shield laws that "what government gives the government can take away," a sentiment that would later become the death knell for a federal shield law.[32]

Two issues later, *E&P* upped the ante. It was "not exactly Armageddon, but":

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[30] Jerry Walker, Jr., "APME sees pressing need for news confidence laws," *Editor & Publisher*, 25 November 1972, 9.

[31] Luther Huston, "Bridge and Farr ignite SDX vigilance for press rights," *Editor & Publisher*, 25 November 1972, 11.

[32] Ibid.

> Lest any newsman not be aware of it, the record of contempt cases against reporters for refusing to divulge their confidential sources is becoming frightening. . . .
>
> The press is embattled against a growing legal philosophy that would require reporters to act as an investigative arm of grand juries, judges and legislative committees forcing them to reveal information given to them in confidence which the government bodies could not uncover on their own.[33]

The editorial went on to quote New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller's warning about what would happen if reporters were forced to disclose their confidential sources: "The kind of resourceful probing journalism that has exposed most of the serious scandals, corruption and injustice in our nation's history would simply disappear. Serious investigative reporting will simply dry up."[34] What effect such statements had on the public is not clear, but a Gallup Poll, released in November 1972, revealed that the public was at least aware of the issue. Fifty-seven percent of those polled, or, as *E&P* chose to report it, "most people in the United States," were on the side of reporters who refused to identify sources. *E&P* viewed the results as an indication that journalists "would have no trouble getting public support for a shield law."[35] *The Quill*, on the other hand, saw the poll as evidence that the general public still did not fully understand the issue.[36]

By the end of 1972 little had been accomplished in the political arena. The shield bills were still sitting in the subcommittees, waiting for the 93rd

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[33] "Not exactly Armageddon, but—," *Editor & Publisher*, 9 December 1972, 6.

[34] Ibid., 6, 12. The quote, from a speech given by Rockefeller, reappeared in the next *E&P* editorial, as well as in the January issue of *The Quill*. "It's getting to be unanimous," *Editor & Publisher*, 16 December 1972, 6; and "More Newsmen Go to Jail; Others in Danger," *The Quill*, January 1973, 30.

[35] 57% don't want newsmen to name their sources," *Editor & Publisher*, 9 December 1972, 13.

[36] "Editor's Column," The *Quill*, January 1973, 5.

Congress to resume hearings on the issue. The new year brought with it little change, except more shield bills.[37] Even *CJR* broke its silence on the subject to comment on what it described as a "proliferating batch" of such laws. It was suspicious of the motives of the politicians who were jumping onto the shield law bandwagon, suggesting that they were merely responding to the publicity generated by the "subpoena jailings." The jailed reporters had "enacted little dramas whose impact on the public, judging from the favorable response in a Gallup Poll, [had] been considerable," *CJR* concluded. Although it did "not appear necessary for [*CJR*] to endorse at this time any single one of the national bills," it did warn journalists not to accept whatever legislators happened to offer them in the way of a law, because,

> every new law, as opponents of shield legislation have noted, carries with it the possibility of restrictive interpretation or amendment; and no law, however sweeping, will be an adequate substitute for the firm constitutional right that was lost in the *Caldwell-Branzburg-Pappas* decision.[38]

The same issue contained an article by Fred Graham and Jack Landau, in which the authors discussed a number of problems that needed to be addressed by any federal shield legislation and proposed solutions to those problems. The article concluded that whether the press could convince Congress to pass legislation depended on whether the media owners were interested in such a law, because, "what the media owners want from Congress, the media owners get from Congress."[39]

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[37] See, e.g., "Mansfield urges Senate inquiry into press curbs," and "Privilege bill is sent to Congress by ANPA," *Editor & Publisher*, 6 January 1973, 13, 9; "Absolute-qualified bill proposed by Pa. Senator," *Editor & Publisher*, 13 January 1973, 9.

[38] "No longer orphans," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 1973, 6.

[39] Fred P. Graham and Jack C. Landau, "The federal shield law we need," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 1973, 35.

A sense of unease began to develop in *E&P* and *The Quill*, as well. There was a shift in the focus of articles in both magazines from a discussion of absolute versus qualified to one of absolute or nothing at all.[40] By February 1973, *E&P* was lamenting that split views on the shield issue were dimming hope for an absolute law.[41] One month later, the hearings on the pending shield bills ended, but final decisions on the bills were thought to "be as remote as man's next landing on the moon."[42] Taking the threats to passage of the shield law seriously, *E&P* began a coordinated program with others to inform the public on the "meaning and importance of their First Amendment rights to free speech and free press."[43]

Despite the efforts of *E&P*, it appeared that the longer the debate raged the more journalists began to doubt the efficacy of any shield law. At the American Society of Newspaper Editors' 1973 convention, approximately 50 percent of the members favored either an absolute or a qualified shield law. "A preponderant number of those who raised their hands, however, indicated that they would be happy with no bill."[44] *E&P* editorialized on the shift in focus:

> Discussion of shield law legislation has developed from debate of qualified vs unqualified legislation to shield law vs no law. Whereas,

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[40] See, e.g., "Reporter says full shield unlikely," *Editor & Publisher*, 20 January 1973, 44; "Qualified or Unqualified," *Editor & Publisher*, 17 February 1973, 4; "Hearings on News Sources Begin This Month," *The Quill*, February 1973, 20.

[41] "Split views on immunity bill dim hope for a full shield," *Editor & Publisher*, 24 February 1973, 7.

[42] Luther A. Huston, "Federal shield bill remains a long shot," *Editor & Publisher*, 24 March 1973, 13.

[43] "Let's work together," *Editor and Publisher*, 24 March 1973, 4. Phase I consisted of a series of six advertisements to be run in local newspapers around the country.

[44] Luther Huston, "Editors split over need for absolute shield law," *Editor & Publisher*, 12 May 1973, 9.

> a few months ago majority sentiment of newspaper editors seemed to support an unqualified or absolute bill in Congress . . . the pendulum appears to have swung to opposition by the majority of editors to any legislation at all in this area.
>
> We have frequently expressed our opposition to any qualified bill and our support of an unqualified bill. However, unless members of Congress can get together on a simple, uncomplicated statement of principle supporting the First Amendment—and the right of reporters to protect their sources, which had been an accepted protection of that Amendment for almost 200 years until recent court decisions—we are inclined to say 'forget it.'[45]

The Quill also chose to comment on the situation:

> More than a few newsmen who once were pushing for an absolute shield law are now having second thoughts as to whether this is really the answer to the press' problems with government. The general feeling among them is that journalists should abandon efforts to acquire new laws and continue to rely on the First Amendment for protection, even if it should mean going to jail.[46]

The Quill's primary concern was that any shield law would require a definition of journalist, even though the Constitution protects freedom of the press for all the people. In attempting to protect reporters with a shield law, Congress, *The Quill* argued, could be "setting a dangerous precedent, albeit acting in good faith." And most importantly, the magazine warned, "when someone establishes boundaries or definitions on something, someone else comes along and licenses it."[47]

As the "no law" sentiment took hold in the press, the House subcommittee approved by a vote of five to three a qualified shield bill. The bill provided that a reporter could be compelled to disclose confidential information and sources "if the court finds that the party seeking the information establishes that 'disclosure or identity is indispensable to the establishment of the offense charged,' cannot be obtained by alternate means and 'that there is a compelling and overriding public interest in requiring disclosure of the identity or information.'" In responding to the subcommittee's call for media reaction to the bill, *E&P* made it clear that its position was one of "no compromise." "The obvious loophole of 'compelling and overriding public interest' is open to such wide interpretation by attorneys and jurists as to make the whole bill an exercise in futility," it argued.[48] The reaction of media organizations to the subcommittee bill was varied. The ANPA opposed bill H.R. 5928, preferring no legislation at all.[49] Sigma Delta Chi, on the other hand, decided to back the bill. Although it was not the absolute privilege that journalists would have preferred, it was "the strongest legislation that realistically could be hoped for at a time when chances of absolute legislation [were] slim to none."[50]

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[45] "Shield law, or no law?" *Editor & Publisher*, 19 May 1973, 4.

[46] "Editor's Column," *The Quill*, May 1973, 5.

[47] Ibid.

Media organizations were not the only ones unable to reach a consensus on the issue of shield laws. The American Bar Association voted to postpone action on recommendations of its study committee that it support a nearly absolute federal law because sufficient time had not been given to the delegates to study the report. Although the question before the ABA was the extent of a proposed shield law, Fred Friendly, professor of broadcast journalism at Columbia University, in a speech to the ABA, said that any reporters' shield law could become "a shield of Damocles." "Once we allow the politicians to enter, even to bestow a shield to please an articulate lobby, we cede to him the jurisdiction to return again, next time perhaps to take it away," he argued.[51]

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[48] "No compromise," *Editor & Publisher*, 23 June 1973, 6.

[49] "ANPA opposes shield bill H.R. 5928," *Editor & Publisher*, 30 June 1973, 13.

[50] "SDX pushes House 'shield' measure . . .," *The Quill*, September 1973, 28.

A very small sampling of investigative reporters by the Associated Press, in July 1973, showed, according to *E&P*, "an almost 50–50 split between advocates of absolute confidentiality and those favoring only limited protection of news sources." Five reporters preferred absolute protection, while six reported favoring a qualified shield. Although the *E&P* stressed this even split in its lead, eleven of those sampled actually urged no law at all.[52]

While journalists were moving away from a shield law, a growing majority of the general public was in favor of legislative protection. An October 1973 Gallup Poll showed that 62 percent of the people questioned believed that a journalist should not be required to reveal confidential sources. That figure was up from 57 percent in November 1972.[53]

Despite the apparent public support and a report in *The Quill* that a general agreement on a qualified bill had been reached between the House subcommittee and ten major media organizations, hope for a shield law waned in 1974.[54] Both *E&P* and *The Quill* continued to report on the growing list of those who were against any shield law,[55] while *CJR* ignored the issue altogether.

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[51] Luther A. Huston, "Degree of immunity remains unsettled issue with ABA," *Editor & Publisher*, 11 August 1973, 14.

[52] "Newsmen, public share same split views on immunity," *Editor & Publisher*, 11 August 1973, 29.

[53] "People for Privilege," *The Quill*, December 1973, 10; and "Public supports adversary role of news media," *Editor & Publisher*, 12 January 1974, 41.

[54] "Hope for Shield Law wanes," *Editor & Publisher*, 9 February 1974, 6; and "Shield law gains group," *The Quill*, February 1974, 8.

[55] "Shield law proposal rejected by lawyers," *Editor & Publisher*, 9 February 1974, 11. "Shield Law Nonsupport," *The Quill*, March 1974, 11. "Shield Law opposed by Washington Post," *Editor & Publisher*, 30 March 1974, 15. "Against Shield Laws," *The Quill*, June 1974, 40.

The Quill's final comment on shield laws came in September 1974 in response to the Supreme Court's decision to deny President Nixon an executive privilege:

> Now, if Congress ever gets its collection of shield bills off the back burner for debate on the floor, a new question would arise: In the current political climate, is there an effective argument that if the President of the United States isn't to be granted special privileges to withhold information, journalists shouldn't be granted that right either?[56]

While *The Quill*'s concern never did materialize, a study, reported on by *E&P* in October 1974, did show that court rulings post-*Branzburg* had failed to end the "news privilege quandary." In fact, "since the Branzburg decision the newsman's privilege [had] been back in the courts in at least a dozen reported, and in numerous unreported decisions . . . ," and "the rulings in these cases [had] at times been almost diametrically opposed." However, the study did conclude that "the courts seem[ed] to be moving toward general guidelines whether shield laws govern[ed] or not."[57]

In its final issue for 1974, *E&P* summed up the year and with it the state of the shield law issue. To the end, *E&P* refused to blame the media for any failure of Congress to enact protection and concluded instead that "proposals for a federal shield law remained dormant in congressional committees, due to a growing lack of enthusiasm for them and open opposition by the American Bar Association."[58]

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[56] "Editor's Column," *The Quill*, September 1974, 2.

[57] "Court rulings fail to end news privilege quandary," *Editor & Publisher*, 12 October 1974, 13.

[58] "'75: new era will arrive— 'the compact newspaper,'" *Editor & Publisher*, 28 December 1974, 9.

Conclusion

By the end of 1974, the issue of a federal shield law had all but disappeared from the pages of the trade journals. The initial outrage that had accompanied release of the Supreme Court ruling in *Branzburg v. Hayes* dissipated in the year following the decision. When the dire prediction of the end of investigative journalism did not materialize, the need for a shield law slowly ebbed in the minds of many reporters. The focus of the debate in media circles shifted from absolute versus qualified to shield versus no shield, as it became clear that the "day when Congress might send a shield bill to the White House could be almost as remote as a landing on Mars."[59]

The same themes were used by those advocating an absolute shield law as those arguing that there should be no law at all. Depending on the point of view, any shield law or only a qualified one could be both a sword of Damocles and a noose around the reporter's neck. Similarly, a qualified shield, an absolute shield, and no shield were all necessary to protect the public's interest.

It is clear from the arguments proffered by those on both sides of the shield issue that the press saw itself as the watchdog of the government during this time period. Its responsibility was to the public, and it took its investigative role seriously. At least in the eyes of the press, a reporter's privilege was in actuality the public's privilege. Although a majority of the public agreed that journalists should not be forced to reveal confidential sources, it is not clear whether the public truly understood the implications of the issue or whether the public were merely reacting to, as the *CJR* suggested, non-criminals being thrown into jail.[60] In either case, the press saw itself as defender of the public's freedom of expression.

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[59] "Partial Shield ok'd by House subcommittee," *Editor & Publisher*, 23 June 1973, 13.

While all three trade publications came out in favor of shield laws, at least in the beginning, only *E&P* took a consistent and definitive editorial stand throughout the time period. Its position from the start was that an absolute shield law was needed to protect journalists from having to disclose confidential sources. For the most part, its reporting on the matter supported that position. The only contentious issue, according to *E&P*, was whether the law was to be absolute or qualified. Other questions, such as how to define journalist for the purposes of any shield law for example, were considered inconsequential by *E&P*.

The Quill, on other hand, was very concerned with the impact any law would have on individual reporters. The magazine reported extensively on the plight of the journalists who were jailed as a result of the *Branzburg* decision. *The Quill* never did take a strong editorial stand on the issue and tended instead to report on the positions taken by the various chapters of Sigma Delta Chi. Such a stance is consistent with its role as a publication for a national journalistic society comprised of individual chapters.

CJR had the most diverse presentation of the issue but also the least coverage. Although *CJR* supported a shield law, at least initially, its articles presented a fuller range of viewpoints on the subject and a more in-depth analysis of the issues than either *E&P* or *The Quill* did.

Did the federal shield law initiative fail because of the inability of the press to agree on anything as scholars have maintained? While it is impossible to give a definitive answer, it is clear from an examination of *E&P*,

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[60] "No longer orphans," *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 1973, 5.

The Quill, and *CJR* for the years 1972 to 1974 that the likelihood of a shield law gaining the support of the press was highest in the first year after the *Branzburg* decision, when emotions were running high. The longer Congress took to act on the matter, the more reporters realized that the world as they knew it was not coming to an end. By the end of 1974, many journalists had come to liken their efforts in Congress to "convicts building gallows from which they will hang," because what Congress can give, Congress can take away.[61]

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[61] Lewis Lapham, "The Temptation of a Sacred Cow," *Harper's,* 24 August 1973, 43.

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The Useful Ogre: Sweden's Use and Views of American Television, 1956-62

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#101

The Useful Ogre: Sweden's Use and Views of American Television, 1956-62

This study discusses the way a Western European public-service broadcaster used programs from the United States and how the system producing those programs was viewed. Using programming schedules and other primary materials as sources, the paper focuses on one country, Sweden, during the early years of television in that nation, 1956-62.

Like most other nations in Western Europe until the virtually universal introduction of commercial television in the mid-1980s, Sweden had entrusted television broadcasting to a government-supported monopoly corporation, Radiotjänst/Sveriges Radio, which was obligated by law to provide programming that was not only entertaining, but, above all, educational and informative. The corporation was barred from accepting advertising and had to rely on government funding and fees levied on TV set ownership for revenue.

Although the number of broadcast hours was kept deliberately low during the early years, Sveriges Radio never had the ambition to supply all of its own programming, and virtually from the start Swedish television used programs from America, particularly telefilm series. Because the U.S. television industry was actively trying to export its products during these years, American telefilm was readily available and plentiful, and, because costs had largely been recovered in the American home market, prices were relatively low. Long familiar with American mass culture through motion pictures, Swedish viewers were generally receptive to television programs from the United States, although concerns were voiced, on occasion, about their violent content.

Beside using programs directly from American television, Sveriges Radio also looked to the United States for programming ideas, and some of the most successful offerings of Swedish television had their roots in genres originated on the other side of the Atlantic.

While thus relying on the U.S. television industry as a supplier, Sveriges Radio was highly critical of the American system, noting with disapproval its emphasis on entertainment and its dependence on advertisers. The sources for that criticism, however, were often American, such as veteran television newsman Edward R. Murrow.

The critical attitude of Swedish television can, to some extent, be explained by domestic factors. Calls for abolishing the non-commercial television monopoly were raised in the Swedish press from time to time, and it was thus in the interest of Sveriges Radio to point out the weaknesses of the world's most purely commercial television system, that of the United States.

#101

The Useful Ogre:
Sweden's Use and Views of American Television, 1956-62

In the fall of 1961, the head of Swedish television took issue with a *New York Times* article that dismissed TV broadcasting in Sweden as poor in technical quality, dull in programming, and content with just "marking time." Chiding the newspaper article's author for his "embarrassing ignorance of the goals and conditions" of Swedish television, Nils-Erik Bæhrendtz pointed out that "TV in Sweden is not, as in America, primarily an entertainment medium."[1]

Bæhrendtz's response was a defense of the public-service broadcasting philosophy that for close to three decades was championed by Sweden and other nations in Western Europe as an alternative to the competitive, commercial television system of the United States. Typically, the European system provided for government-supported monopoly corporations, which, in exchange for their favored position, were obligated to put education and information before entertainment. In the mid-1980s, the emergence of new technologies like satellites and cable television and a decline in government financial support led to a drastic policy change that ended broadcast monopolies throughout Western Europe and opened the doors to American-style advertiser-funded television. With that change came an increased demand for entertainment programming, most of it produced in the United States.[2]

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[1] Nils-Erik Bæhrendtz, "Mr gansbergs sällsamma iakttagelser," *Röster i Radio-TV* (hereafter, *RiR-TV*), 28 October-4 November 1961, 3; the American article must have been published in a European edition of the *Times*, since it is not in the American one.

[2] Yves Achille and Bernard Miège, "The Limits to the Adaptation of European Public Service Television," *Media, Culture & Society* (hereafter *MC&S*) 16 (1994), 33; Guiseppe Richeri, "Television From Service to Business: European Tendencies and the Italian Case," in Phillip Drummond and Richard Paterson (eds.) *Television in Transition* (London: BFI Publishing, 1986), 21-27; Heiki Hellman and Tuomo Sauri, "Public Service Television and the Tendency Towards Convergence: Trends in Prime-Time Programme Structure in Finland, 1970-92," *MC&S* 16 (1994):50.

Even before the end of European monopoly public-service broadcasting, however, programming and concepts from commercial television in the United States had found their way into Europe's public-service systems, and the purpose of this study is show the relationship between American TV and one of these systems, that of Sweden. Although the concern here is exclusively with one country, Sweden is typical of a number of nations whose limited production resources and domestic markets make it necessary to rely on imports to fulfill programming schedules.[3]

The study is based on a detailed examination of the programming schedules, articles and notices of *Röster i Radio-TV,* a magazine that was a Swedish counterpart to *TV Guide,* with the major difference that it was published by the Swedish broadcasting corporation, Sveriges Radio, and thus reflected its views. Primary sources used to supplement *Röster i Radio-TV* were the annuals of Sveriges Radio, the leading Stockholm dailies and their annuals, the official publications of the European Broadcasting Union, and American and British trade publications. The study focuses on the first few years of regular Swedish television broadcasts, 1956-62, and discusses how Sveriges Radio used American programs and how the corporation viewed the system producing them. First, however, it is necessary to provide a brief history of television in Sweden.

Regular television broadcasting started in the fall of 1956, under the auspices of Radiotjänst, the corporation responsible for radio. Radiotjänst, renamed Sveriges Radio in 1957, was modeled on the British Broadcasting Corporation and was a private corporation granted a monopoly by the government, which, in exchange, was given the right to appoint the corporation's chairman and some of its directors. Stock ownership in Radiotjänst/SR was legally regulated to represent the press, the radio industry, the national associations of employers and employees, and organizations representing popular causes such as temperance, and laws also committed the corporation to ensure that its programming that was impartial, objective and diverse. Finally, Radiotjänst/SR could not accept advertising and but had instead, in the tradition of radio, to rely on government funding and license fees levied on receivers for revenue.[4]

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[3] Muriel G. Cantor and Joel M. Cantor, *Prime-Time Television: Content and Control* (2nd ed., Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1992), 101-102; according to the Cantors, other countries in this group are France, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Finland, South Africa, Australia, and Italy.

[4] Ingvar Andersson, *et al., Introduction to Sweden* (Stockholm: The Swedish Institute, 1961), 162-63; "SWEDEN: Report on Television and Government Proposals for the Future," *EBU Bulletin* 7 (37, May-June

By European standards, television came late to Sweden. On the continent, the medium had been introduced during the first years of the 1950s or earlier, and, in Sweden's immediate vicinity, Danish TV had been broadcasting since 1954. Denmark was the smallest and most densely populated Scandinavian nation, and its head start in television broadcasting was due, to some extent, to Swedish doubts whether the medium could be viable in a country that was the fourth largest in Europe but ranked only seventeenth in population. Those doubts were articulated in a 1956 government report, which stressed that Sweden's low population density and oblong geographical shape would make it expensive to construct a nation-wide transmitter network, particularly in the northern two-thirds of the country where only a minority of the 7.4 million inhabitants lived.[5]

If Swedes were late-comers to television, however, they embraced the medium with a vengeance once introduced to it. A 1958 government report that called for an "accelerated" expansion of the transmitter network noted that the number of new owners of television sets had "far exceeded all predictions." The number of licenses paid by owners of TV sets had gone from 8,900 at the close of 1956 to 75,000 a year later; as 1958 came to an end, it had soared to 244,000, and that figure had more than doubled the following year, reaching 599,000. The remarkable popularity of television in Sweden is best shown through a comparison with other countries. Using the measurements of sets per 1,000 inhabitants, the country ranked 17th in the world in 1956, with 1.4. In late 1959, with 81 televisions per 1,000 inhabitants, Sweden had risen to fourth place behind the United States, Canada and Britain, and four years later, when there was one set for every five Swedes, the country had become the most television-dense country in the world outside North America.[6]

Swedish viewers' enthusiasm for TV was all the more remarkable in light of how little they had to watch. Even with set ownership exceeding all expectations, Sveriges Radio was bound by a government policy that concentrated efforts and financial resources

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1956), 437.

[5] Per Martin Hamberg, "Till televisionens 5-årsjubileum," *Sveriges Radio, Årsbok* (hereafter *SR Årsbok)* 1959, 80; "SWEDEN: Report on Television," 438; years for the introduction of television in most European countries are given in J.D. Halloran and P.R.C. Elliott, "European Broadcasters and Children's Television," *Television Quarterly* 9(3, Summer 1970):65-75.

[6] Henrik Hahr, "TV år två," *SR Årsbok* 1959, 97-98; the 1959 figure was well ahead of a 1956 government estimate for the year 1963, which was projected to be 393,000; "SWEDEN: Extension of Television Network," *EBU Bulletin* 8 (42, March-April 1957), 218; *Statistisk årsbok för Sverige,* 1957-68.

to the construction of the network of stations, stressing, as a British observer put it, an expansion of "the number of transmitters rather than transmission." In practical terms, the policy meant that government funding would go primarily toward station construction and that money to increase programming hours, generated mainly by license fees, would not be available until a substantial share of the population owned sets. In the meantime, SR should, a 1956 government report recommended, keep programming to "a minimum." Corporation officials translated that into a directive to practice "far-reaching restraint when it comes to expanding broadcasting hours" and proceeded to carry it out: in the 1956-57 season, programming averaged a mere 9 hours a week, on a single channel. That figure grew to 16 in 1957-58 and 21 the following season; by the end of the time period studied here, 1961-62, SR broadcast 28 hours every week, or four hours daily.[7]

Even with this limited programming commitment, Sveriges Radio did not plan on calling on its own producers to fill the enrire broadcasting schedule. Reviewing the 16 weekly programming hours offered by SR in 1958, Henrik Hahr, the head of the television section at the time, divided them into the corporation's own production—10 hours—and 6 hours of "special programs." Although the latter category included live programming of a special-events nature (such as the occasional broadcasting of important parliamentary debates) produced by Sveriges Radio, it consisted overwhelmingly of "rented film," which, as the term implies, had to be acquired outside the corporation. In the early years of Swedish television, then, one out of every three programming hours would not be supplied by Sveriges Radio.[8]

A likely supplier of rented films was the Swedish film industry, but from that quarter Sveriges Radio encountered the same hostility that had characterized the attitude of motion-picture producers in other countries where television had been introduced.

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[7] "SWEDEN: Extension," 218; "Sweden increases network," *Television Today* (London), 14 January 1960, 16; Hamberg, "Televisionens 5-årsjubileum," 80; Carl-Adam Nycop, "Radikal uppryckning krävs efter TV:s svaga år," *Expressen*, 11 December 1957, 5; *Statistisk årsbok för Sverige*, 1957-68.

[8] Hahr, "TV år två," 98, 102; *Hört och sett: Radio och television, 1925-1974* (Stockholm: Sveriges Radio, 1974), 208; Sveriges Radio's own production consisted of regular "live programming"—which included the popular entertainment programs shown each Saturday night—and "film," a category which according to Hahr consisted of documentaries, newscast footage and shorts; an indication that foreign programming would be prominent in the broadcasting schedules is that two SR employees early on went to work on (and solved) the problem of how to make subtitles for TV programs; "Två herrar gör en maskin," *Röster i Radio*, 11-17 Nov. 1956, 38; in 1963, Sveriges Radio Director-General Olof Rydbeck noted that 59 percent of the programming was produced by SR, 25 percent consisted of "rented films," and 16 percent was supplied by Eurovision and Nordvision; Rydbeck, "Broadcasting in Sweden," *EBU Review* 80B (July 1963), 10.

Worried about the impact of the new medium on cinema attendance, Swedish film companies either asked for rental fees that the financially strapped broadcasting corporation could not pay or refused point blank to rent recently released films to television. As a consequence, the films that SR was able to secure were characterized by the Stockholm evening tabloid *Expressen* as "shoddy and stale" when the paper reviewed the 1956-57 season, and the corporation's admission that its feature-film offerings that season had been "of varying age and quality" did not seem to dispute *Expressen's* verdict.[9]

Given its experience with the domestic film industry, it is not surprising that Sveriges Radio looked abroad for suppliers, and here the fledgling Swedish television broadcaster encountered a decidedly warmer reception. American commercial television was increasingly marketing its products abroad in the mid-1950s, and to Sweden and other buyers it offered made-for-TV films that were not only of a high technical quality but also inexpensive, having recovered most of their production costs in the large American domestic market. Moreover, telefilm from the United States was able to capitalize on the long-standing and secure presence of American mass culture in Sweden, a presence that had begun with the introduction of dime novels at the turn of the century and had come to the forefront in the silent-film era of the 1920s. By the time television made its debut in Sweden in 1956, stories, images and settings from America were familiar to Swedish viewers.[10]

American telefilm was, in fact, present from the start of Swedish television, because the first Saturday of regular broadcasting in September 1956 was topped off by Lucille Ball's situation-comedy series *I Love Lucy*. Following a practice of Swedish film distributors to use American home-market popularity as a bellwether for success in Sweden, Sveriges

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[9] "Radio och television," *När-Var-Hur: Aktuell uppslagsbok* (Stockholm: Forum, 1957), 325; "20 frågor till Hamberg," *RiR-TV,* 6-12 September 1959, 56; Frederic Fleisher, "Swedish Films Fight... The Latest Enemy—Television," *The Stage and Television Today* (London), 14 May 1959, 11; Fleisher, "TV Saturating Sweden; Woes Multiply," *Variety,* 20 April 1960, 101; "Svensk TV år ett," 62; Nycop, "Radikal uppryckning"; Stig T.L. Ericson, "Svensk TV i skottgluggen," *Stockholms-Tidningen,* 19 December 1957, 5; Tage Ekstedt, "Explosionsartad TV-utveckling," *Svenska Dagbladets Årsbok* 1957, 201.

[10] William Boddy, "The Beginnings of American Television," in Anthony Smith (ed.), *Television: An International History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 56-58; Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty:The Evolution of American Television* (2nd rev. ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 229-36; "Reiner Sees Foreign Market in '57 Hitting 30% of TPA's Total Gross," *Variety,* 12 June 1957, 58; Ulf Boëthius, *När Nick Carter drevs på flykten: Kampen mot "smutslitteraturen" i Sverige 1908-09* (Stockholm: Gidlunds, 1989); Ulf Jonas Bjork, "'The Backbone of Our Business': American Film in Sweden, 1910-50," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 15 (2, 1995):245-63; Hans Hoehn, "Yank Stars, H'wood Pix, U.S. Jazz Vital Part of Stockholm Show Biz," *Variety,* 2 October 1957, 16.

Radio appeared to have acquired *Lucy* primarily because of its popularity in the United States. Although the series was not quite the success that SR had hoped for, at least not the first time it was shown, that did not stop the corporation from showing another American comedy series, *Our Miss Brooks,* when *Lucy* ended its run in December 1956.[11]

Shown late on Saturday night, *Lucy* and *Miss Brooks* were intended for adults, but American telefilm was also making early inroads in time slots dedicated to programming for children and adolescents, and it was here that they generated the most attention and concern. The first imported telefilm in this area was British, the BBC-produced puppet show *Andy Pandy,* but after only a few months Sveriges Radio announced that included in the children's programming for Friday, a previously non-broadcast day, would be an American series starring Johnny Weismuller, *Djungel Jim* (*Jungle Jim*). From then on, as hours of children's programming expanded, so did the number of American telefilm series, so when Saturday was given its own block of young-viewer programming in the fall of 1957, three American series took turns: *Champion--den vilda hästen (Adventures of Champion), Modiga Örnen (Brave Eagle),* and *Äventyr i helikopter (Whirlybirds).*[12]

As the reception of *Lucy* indicated, adult Swedes did not always like American series, but their children were generally enthusiastic about them, and they held up well even against children's programming produced by Sveriges Radio itself. When the corporation commissioned a survey in 1960 to map out children's viewing habits and preferences, it found two U.S. series, *Lassie* and *Disneyland*, to be the most popular, beating out not only other imports but home-made favorites as well.[13]

The popularity of American programming among young viewers and the apparent willingness of Sveriges Radio to provide such programming gave rise to concern among intellectuals and experts. Writing as "guest critics" in *Röster i Radio-TV* in 1958, prominent child psychiatrists Gustav Jonsson and Margareta Embring-Jonsson contrasted the

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[11] Lennart Ehrenborg, "Nu Kommer—I Love Lucy," *RiR*, 19-25 Sept. 1956, 11; Ehrenborg, "Så filmas Lucy," *RiR*, 14-20 Oct. 1956, 38-39; *När-Var-Hur*, 1958, 306; *Hört och sett*, 208; "Träff med TV-familj," *RiR*, 23-29 December 1956, 17; "Kort sagt," *RiR-TV*, 24 February-2 March 1957, 14; "Röda nejlikan—ny filmserie," *RiR-TV*, 31 March-6 April 1957, 18; "Våran fröken—ny TV-serie," *RiR-TV*, 9-15 December 1956, 19.

[12] "Filmsommar," *RiR*, 2-8 September 1956, 12; *Hört och sett*, 204-05; *RiR*, 21-27 October 1956, 38; "Nu kommer Djungel Jim," *RiR*, 25 November-1 December 1956, 19; "Sex program i veckan för barn och ungdom," *RiR-TV*, 8-14 September 1957.

[13] Rune Sjödén, "Vad pappa ser—ser barnen," *Röster i Radio-TV*, 20-26 November 1960, 18-19; Ekstedt, "Explosionsartad," 199; "20 frågor," 17, 56.

"suitable" children's programming produced in Sweden with American imports such as *Lassie,* which, they wrote, depicted "a brutal and rough film reality, where fistfights are always in the air and guns are loose in their holsters." Concerned, the Jonssons urged Sveriges Radio to stop "that kind of Americanization."[14]

Similar concerns soon began to be voiced by parents as well. Early complaints were about the "sadism" and violence of American cartoons, but mothers and fathers also disliked telefilms because of their violent content. *Jungle Jim*, had, according the the SR corporation history, produced "the first, mild debate over entertainment violence," and a few years later, the 1960 survey of children's viewing habits revealed that telefilms topped parents' list of the worst programs for children.[15]

The difficulty facing Sveriges Radio when it came to balancing parental concerns about violence against the indisputable popularity of American telefilm is best illustrated by the introduction of a genre with a high potential for violence, the TV western. At the peak of its popularity in the United States in the late 1950s, the genre had also proven to be a successful export commodity, and Swedish television showed its first western series, *Gunsmoke,* in the summer of 1959.[16]

Westerns were broadcast late at night, an indication that Sveriges Radio saw them as intended for adults, and the corporation seemed to think that it was necessary to promote them as legitimate entertainment for that segment of the viewing audience. *Gunsmoke* was introduced in *Röster i Radio-TV* with a *Time* article that stressed how immensely popular the genre was in the United States, and the premier episode was ushered in by none other than TV chief Bæhrendtz himself, who followed up the one-air introduction with a column in the following week's *Röster i Radio-TV.* There he likened the mythology of the American West to the Odyssey and the Iliad because both sought to entertain their audiences with tales of "incomparable heroes, life-or-death struggle, physical courage, deeds."[17]

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[14] Gustav Jonsson and Margareta Embring-Jonsson, "En hemlivets renässans," *RiR-TV,* 12-18 January 1958, 25; Jonsson and Embring-Jonsson, "Mindre schablon," *RiR-TV,* 19-25 January 1958, 53.

[15] Gunnar Västberg, "Familjen och den nya tidens ande," *RiR-TV,* 5-11 January 1958, 46; "TV-debatten fortsätter: Varför så råa barnfilmer?" *Expressen,* 26 December 1957, *Hört och sett* ,208; Sjödén, "Vad pappa ser," 18-19; it should be noted, that the three shows listed by name, *The Buccaneers, Adventures of Robin Hood, William Tell,* all were made in Britain, although with American involvement; "Telepix Clouds over Europe," *Variety* 5 September, 1956, 27.

[16] Barnouw, *Tube*, 213-14; *Hört och sett,* 209; Lennart Ehrenborg, "Långfilm, seriefilm, novellfilm—och annan sorts film," *SR Årsbok,* 1960, 150.

Despite Bæhrendtz's efforts, *Gunsmoke* was not an unqualified hit with Swedish viewers. There were no doubts, however, about the popularity of the second western shown in Sweden, *Bonanza,* which began running in late December 1959. Although only six episodes were broadcast during the next six months and another western (*Wanted Dead or Alive* with Steve McQueen) alternated with *Bonanza*, the Cartwright family became particular Swedish favorites. Answering a letter from a 12-year-old girl in February 1960, *Röster i Radio-TV* noted that her idol Michael Landon (who played Joe Cartwright) was "a kind of pioneer" because he was "the first foreign idol to become popular with Swedish viewers exclusively through TV." A few months later, an SR official described Saturday night on Swedish television as "Cartwright night," and, in early 1961, *Röster i Radio-TV* pointed out that *Bonanza* was more popular in Sweden than in its homeland and attributed part of its success to "Adam and Little Joe charming the female audience with an appropriate mixture of cooldbloodedness, toughness and unexpected tenderness."[18]

As the letter from the Landon fan showed, westerns were watched by younger viewers, and parental concern over that fact had surfaced in the 1960 survey, where mothers and fathers considered the entire genre unfit for their children. Sveriges Radio seemed ambivalent in its attitude. On the one hand, the corporation assured worried parents that each episode of *Bonanza* was screened for problematic content, such as "certain forms of violence, pure stupidity, racial and religious persecution and sex with a sensational purpose," and SR pointed out that every other Cartwright show so far had not been deemed worthy of being aired. (*Lassie,* a show clearly intended for younger viewers, was also screened, with one episode in four not being judged fit for broadcast.) Bæhrendtz had stressed that children below 12 should "refrain" from watching *Gunsmoke,* and, in both programming schedules and in the announcements before the broadcast, westerns were labeled as "not suitable for children."[19]

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[17] "TV-nytt," *RiR-TV,* 19-25 July, 3; "Succé i hästväg," *RiR-TV,* 12-18 July 1959, 12-13, 43; Nils-Erik Bæhrendtz, "Varför just VILDA VÄSTERN?" *RiR-TV,* 19-25 July 1959, 3.

[18] Ehrenborg, "Långfilm," 150; "20 frågor,", 56; *RiR-TV,* 7-13 February 1960, 53; see also 20-26 March, 53; 17-23 July, 53; 18-24 September, 29; Lars Ulvenstam, "Cowboyen i vårt hjärta," *RiR-TV,* 23-29 October 1960, 21, 52-54.

[19] Lars-Eric Örtegren, "Behöver TV-filmerna censur?" *RiR-TV,* 18-24 December 1960, 19, 64-65; "TV-nytt."

At the same time, however, SR appeared to acknowledge that children and adolescents did watch westerns. Although the TV chief warned parents not to expose children to *Gunsmoke,*Bæhrendtz denied that "modern 'bang-bang-shoot'" was more harmful than "the heroics of Robin Hood in historical times" and noted that "my own kid likes to watch Wild West films and has not been harmed by the genre." Also, once the popularity of westerns was established, the corporation's promotional efforts stopped comparing *Gunsmoke* and its successors to classic literature and took on a more juvenile tone. *Bonanza* was ushered in with the contention that "[n]o man ever outgrows electric trains and westerns" and the promise that "all boys between 20 and 70 will get their fill of cowboy adventures," and *Bronco, Bonanza's* successor, was touted as "tougher than Cartwright."[20]

In 1961, that kind of appeal came back to haunt Sveriges Radio. In late 1960, a letter to *Röster i Radio-TV* had demanded that *Bonanza* be canceled because there was no reason for Swedish television "to enlighten gangster whelps how to shoot a man dead," and the letter writer's warning seemed eerily prescient when, a few months later, a drunken teenager went on a shooting rampage at a school dance in the western town of Kungälv, killing one person and wounding several others. As police questioned the boy, it was revealed that he had "the Cartwrights on the brain" and had seen every single episode of the series. The Stockholm tabloid press conjured up a scene where the teenager, shouting "blood will flow here tonight," pictured himself in a frontier saloon, and a heated debate over the influence of TV westerns ensued.[21]

Under attack, Sveriges Radio commented through *Röster i Radio-TV* that to "those who take the trouble to think calmly and sensibly, to those who know youngsters and to those who who know a thing or two about the manifold influences that shape a personality," blaming television was a "shamefully simple" solution. For the most part, readers tended to agree, pointing out that the young man's problems clearly went beyond watching too many

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[20] "TV-nytt"; *RiR-TV,* 8-14 November 1959, 22; Lars Malgefors, "Tuffare än Cartwright: Bronco," *RiR-TV,* 19-25 February 1961, 40.

[21] "Bort med 'Cartwrights,'" *RiR-TV,* 20-26 November 1960, 4; "...Men ska Cartwrights lynchas?" *RiR-TV,* 19-25 March 1961, 60-61, 63; many young Swedes wrote to defend *Bonanza,* both before and after the shooting; "Torget," *RiR-TV,* 11-17 December 1960, 4; "Torget," *RiR-TV,* 19-25 March 1961, 4; "Cartwrights är oskyldiga," *RiR-TV,* 9-15 April, 53; ironically, the series had been off the air for more than a month when the shooting occurred, and the western being shown at the time was *Bronco.*

TV westerns. Still, the shooting seemed to make Sveriges Radio wary of *Bonanza*, and not until June 1962 was another episode broadcast. The westerns that followed the Cartwright family saga were subjected to increased scrutiny. *Bronco,* broadcast in the spring of 1961, was censored because of violent content, and when it in turn was succeeded by *Prärie (Rawhide), Röster i Radio-TV* noted that both critics and viewers liked the new series, "particularly because the films do not contain any detestable scenes of violence." When *Bonanza* finally returned, viewers were assured that, in the opening episode, "violent acts are few, yes, there is not a single shot fired."[22]

While the Kungälv shootings may have led to the cancellation of individual episodes of westerns, they had no no discernible effect on the general influx of American telefilm, which continued unabated in the spring of 1961. *Röster i Radio-TV* noted in April that "Perry Como fans have had a boring time" but that their wish for more of the singer's shows were about to be fulfilled, and the visit of Raymond Burr to Sweden a few months later saw the star of *Perry Mason* being mobbed by enthusiastic teenage admirers who were following his exploits on television.[23]

Beside what *Röster i Radio-TV* called "the two Perrys" and westerns (*Bonanza, Bronco, Rawhide*, and *Wagon Train*), Swedes during 1961 were watching *Överste Flack (Colonel Flack), Disneyland, Pappa vet bäst (Father Knows Best), Min vän Flicka (My Friend Flicka), Min fru från Paris (Angel), Playhouse 90,* and *Familjen Flinta (The Flintstones)*. "We see a multitude of of American films, American entertainment shows, and American documentary products in Swedish TV," an SR official noted in September. When some viewers thought there was too much of it, however, the corporation called it "a mistake" to think that Swedish television "mainly" relied on the United States as a supplier of films.[24]

Depending on the measurement used, that statement was more or less truthful. Using two fall weeks for each of the years from 1956 to 1961 as a sampling period, it is evident that American telefilm did not exceed 10 percent of all programs broadcast. (There were seasonal variations, however: as Sveriges Radio's own producers began taking summer vacation in June each year, the number of imports increased.) Considering telefilm by itself, however, there is little doubt that the United States dominated. Of the fourteen series shown on Swedish television during the 1956-57 and 1957-58 seasons, ten came from America and four from Britain. Twenty-three series were shown in 1959-60, eighteen of which were made in the United States. (Even if the term "film" is expanded to include feature films shown on television, Swedish viewers were most likely to encounter an American-made production there, too: in the 1959-60 season, for instance, one film in three came from the United States, as compared with one in six from the next largest supplier, France.)[25]

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[22] "...Men ska Cartwrights lynchas?"; "Cartwrights är oskyldiga," *RiR-TV,* 9-15 April, 53; *RiR-TV,* 18-24 June 1962, 44; "Sheriffen i vårt hjärta," *RiR-TV,* 26 May-3 June,1961, 25; *RiR-TV,* 22-29 July 1961, 30; *RiR-TV,* 30 April-6 May 1961, 31; *RiR-TV,* 9-16 June 1962, 40.

[23] *RiR-TV,* 9-15 April 1961, 23; *RiR-TV,* 4-10 June 1961, 28; Stig Ahlberg, "Perry Mason," *RiR-TV,* 15-22 July, 8-11, 44; *Svenska Dagbladets Årsbok* 1961, 15.

[24] "Svenskt panorama i USA," *RiR-TV,* 2-9 September 1961, 53; "Varför så mycket amerikanskt?" *RiR-TV,* 19-26 May 1962, 5.

Some of the telefilm series were documentaries, as the quotation above indicates, but the majority, nine out of ten in 1956-58 and two-thirds in 1959-60, were entertainment, and that indicates what use Sveriges Radio made of American imports. When it came to the two main functions of the public-service obligation, education and information, Swedish television produced most of the material it broadcast. In the area of entertainment, however, it relied heavily on the technically sophisticated, plentiful and inexpensive offerings of American commercial TV. That was particularly the case with fiction film, a programming category with high production costs.

The telefilm series that Sveriges Radio imported were the most direct evidence of the relationship with American television, but the latter's influence extended beyond imports. SR officials liked to talk about having been schooled in the tradition of the BBC, the acknowledged pioneer in public-service broadcasting, but when it came to looking for programming ideas, Swedish television went more often to America than to Britain. That was particularly evident in the first season of regular broadcasts, when Radiotjänst was faced with the challenge of producing programming that would fit its very limited budget but also be popular enough to induce Swedes to buy television sets and pay license fees.[26]

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[25] The period for each year began with the week containing 26 October, a randomly selected date; the length of time was borrowed from two UNESCO studies analysing global television content, see Tapio Varis, "International Flow of Television Programmes," Unesco, *Reports and Papers on Mass Communication,* No. 100 (1985); and Kaarle Nordenstreng and Tapio Varis, "Television Traffic--a One-Way Street," Unesco, *Reports and Papers on Mass Communication,* No. 70 (1974), 14, 22; "Programkalendern TV," *SR Årsbok* 1958, 254-55; "Sale of U.S. Telefilms Abroad," *Variety,* 4 January 1958, 37; *Variety,* 8 July 1959, 55; "Programkalender—TV," *SR Årsbok* 1960, , 313-15, 317; "U.S. Vidfilm Sales in Overseas Markets," *Variety,* 27 July 1960, 50; Ehernenborg, "Långfilm," 150.

In January 1957, four months into the season, Radiotjänst premiered a Saturday program that proved an outstanding success with the public and was labeled, in retrospect, the "battering ram" that breached public hesitancy toward TV as a medium. It was a quiz show where "average" Swedes showed off their knowledge in specialized areas, and it ran for 12 weeks, making national celebrities out of several contestants. Officially titled *Kvitt eller dubbelt* (*Double or Nothing*), the program's informal name, *10 000-kronorsfrågan* (*The 10,000 Crown Question*), gives a clear indication of where the idea had come from, since the *The $64,000 Question,* had long been running on American television. (Moreover, the American connection was generally recognized in the press.) Throughout its first five years, Swedish television returned to the United States for quiz-show ideas, producing its own versions of *21, Play Your Hunch, Your first Impression,* and *Concentration.*[27]

None of the successors of *Kvitt eller dubbel* ever matched the success of , that pioneer program, however, but another American genre was later used with great success as a model for what was, possibly, the most popular program ever produced by Sveriges Radio, *Hylands Hörna* (*Hyland's Corner*). A long-standing staple of Saturday nights, the program was the creation of Lennart Hyland, a seasoned variety-show host on both radio and television, and he had based it on American talk shows, particularly *The Tonight Show* with Jack Paar.[28]

While Sveriges Radio thus made ready use of American commercial television as a source of programming and ideas, its view of the system that produced them was critical, particularly around 1960. That criticism surfaced during that time was, to a large extent, due to developments in the United States, and Swedish criticism can be said to have risen out of four specific events: the complaints of playwrights about restrictions on live TV drama, the scandal surrounding rigged quiz shows, the publicly voiced disaffection of pioneering news broadcaster Edward R. Murrow, and the criticism of Federal Communications Commission Chairman Newton Minow.

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[26] Hamberg, "Televisionens 5-årsjubileum," 79, 90.

[27] "Kvitt eller dubbelt," *RiR-TV,* 2-8 December 1956, 19; Hamberg, "Televisionens 5-årsjubileum," 83; "Radio och television," *När-Var-Hur* 1958, 324-25; *Hört och sett*, 198; one contestant, the teenage fish expert Ulf Hannerz, was even mentioned in *Newsweek* (25 February 1957, 66); Ingvar Orre, "Adjö till TV:s '21,'" *Stockholms-Tidningen,* 28 December 1957, 4; Hemming Sten, "TV skjuter in sig amerikanskt på våra fördomar," *Expressen,* 6 March 1957, 4; Allan Schulman, "På lek, på lek," *RiR-TV,* 26 May-2 June 1962, 23.

[28] Schulman, "På lek," 55; *Hört och sett,* 238.

Early discussion of American television tended to focus less on the system's foundation—private ownership and funding though advertising—than on America's status as a pioneering television society. In the debate over the medium's influence on children, for instance, articles in *Röster i Radio-TV* frequently referred to American reports about "narcoticizing" effects and television "addiction" among children, looking at the United States because television was most developed there.[29]

As the events listed above unfolded, however, the attention shifted to the system itself. An early sign was a 1958 "report from the USA" that related the complaints by writer Rod Serling about network and sponsor censorship of one of his scripts. Later that year, a story by Lennart Hyland told of the criminal investigations of the quiz shows and characterized Murrow as "the slave who stands and whispers words of warning on the triumphal chariot of U.S. TV" by letting "sensible people brand bad TV." When Murrow, soon to leave television for good, visited Sweden in 1960, *Röster i Radio-TV* published excerpts from an interview where the American was said to "envy us who are allowed to present important programs in prime time." In the United States, Murrow said, viewers would switch to a channel with entertainment if faced with information in prime time, preferring to be "lulled by dancing and shows."[30]

FCC Chairman Minow's "vast wasteland" speech attacking the programs on network television was first noted in a *Röster i Radio-TV* article in October 1961, a few months after it had been given, and Nils-Erik Bæhrendtz had it in mind when his response to the *New York Times* the following week referred to "fierce attacks" on American commercial TV from "government circles." Following the theme of commercial television under attack as a result of Minow's speech, *Röster i Radio-TV* published long articles by two different correspondents in early 1962. The first correspondent, Dieter Strand, was an SR employee who was studying political science in the United States, and his article characterized the American TV industry as a monopoly where networks and sponsors were fighting for ultimate control. The only scale they used to judge the value of a program was its ratings,

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[29] Torsten Husén, "Om parallelmänniskan i TV-åldern," *RiR-TV,* 13-19 April 1958, 23; Knut and Katarina Ahnlund, "En personlighet med maktresurser," *RiR-TV,* 25-31 May 1958, 51.

[30] "Rapport från USA!" *RiR-TV,* 17-23 August 1958, 21; Hyland, "Amerikansk TV ett irrbloss," *RiR-TV,* 22-28 December 1958, 19; *RiR-TV,* 25-31 December 1960, 28.

Strand claimed, and those had to exceed 40 percent of the viewing audience for a program to survive. A less critical article by Ivar Ivre the following week stressed that there were, in fact, "oases" such as news documentaries in "the wasteland," but they were few, and anyone wanting something other than "entertainment, detective shows, and the Cartwright brothers and their cousins" would not find it during prime time.[31]

No other national television system was given as much attention in *Röster i Radio-TV,* not even the much-admired British one, and Sveriges Radio's own situation provides an explanation. In his response to the *Times* article that was so critical of Swedish television, Bæhrendtz thought that the newspaper's real reason for bringing up Sweden was to come to the defense of American TV, and his argument can be used, in reverse, to explain why Sveriges Radio and its programming magazine were so critical of the U.S. system: it was a way to answer critics at home. Although the Swedish government ultimately decided to continue the tradition of radio and give the responsibility for TV broadcasting to the non-commercial Radiotjänst monopoly in 1956, that decision had been preceded by fairly aggressive lobbying by business and industry to make the new medium a commercial venture along American lines. Assessing what they characterized as a "weak" and "amateurish" first season of television in 1957, two leading Stockholm newspapers thought that the idea of a non-commercial television monopoly needed to be reconsidered, so, with that argument very much alive, it was in the interest of Sveriges Radio to point to the weaknesses of commercial television, which, in its purest form, was found only in the United States.[32]

In summation, Sveriges Radio's attitude toward American television was ambivalent, to say the least. The U.S. system was criticized for producing programs that left Lennart Hyland with an impression of "primitive brutality and naively sugar-coated entertainment," that was "cold" in comparison with what Europeans made and, in the case of westerns, often too "quasi-psychological and quasi-romanticized." In the course of ten evenings, the American networks spent the equivalent of the entire Sveriges Radio budget for the 1961-62 season, according to Ivar Ivre, but their dependence on advertisers and audience ratings resulted in shows that mimicked one another and offered nothing but escapist entertainment.[33]

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[31] Ivar Ivre, "Rensa upp i skräpkammaren," *RiR-TV,* 14-21 October 1961, 52; Bæhrendtz, "Mr gansberg"; Strand, "USA fria TV-land 1: Se till att 40 procent tittar!" *RiR-TV,* 27 January-3 February 1962, 3; Ivre, "Oaserna i TV:s ödemark," *RiR-TV,* 3-10 February 1962, 28-29, 48.

[32] *Hört och sett,* 178; "SWEDEN: Report on Television," 436; Ericson, "Svensk TV"; Nycop, "Radikal uppryckning."

On the other hand, Swedish television bought and broadcast many of these programs, and it gave them enthusiastic promotion in its programming magazine. Tacitly acknowledging commercial television's ability to generate products that viewers liked, Sveriges Radio's purchasing department routinely used the success of a program in the United States as a means of forecasting its popularity in Sweden.

In the end, there was, perhaps, little else that Sweden's public-service broadcaster could do. Faced with a limited budget and an obligation to expand broadcasting hours and determined to use what resources it had mainly for education and information, Sveriges Radio could not do without the plentiful and inexpensive offerings of the U.S. commercial system. That pattern had been set during the formative years in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and it would continue throughout the life of Sweden's public-service television monopoly. It was, moreover, a pattern shared with other Western European nations.[34]

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[33] Hyland, "Amerikansk TV," 18; *RiR-TV,* 11-17 June 1961, 27; Allan Schulman, "Bröderna Cartwright rider igen," *RiR-TV,* 9-16 June 1962, 12; Ivre, "Oaserna," 28.

[34] The international television-content studies done by Tapio Varis and Kaarle Nordenstreng in 1973 and 1983 show that the proportion of imported programming on Swedish television--about one-third--was not markedly different from that of other countries, with the exception of Britain and France, whose share was only one-sixth; Varis, "International Flow," 20, 31; Nordenstreng and Varis, "Television Traffic,", 14, 22; a Sveriges Radio study of the 1976-77 season found the share of imported programming to be higher, 46 percent; Ulf Berg, Foreign Fare on Swedish Television (Stockholm: Sveriges Radio, Publik- och Programforskningsavdelningen, 1978), 3.

BLACK OR NEGRO?
THE MEDIA'S DILEMMA OF RACIAL IDENTIFIERS, 1967-1971

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The Rev. Jesse Jackson's announcement in 1988 that black Americans now prefer to be called "African Americans"[1] harkened back to the successful imposition of "black" over "Negro" some twenty years earlier, the ascendancy of "Negro" over "Colored" around the turn of the twentieth century, and the acceptance of "Colored" over "African" in the early 1800s.[2]

These were not superficial identity crises; rather, each was an attempt by Americans of African descent to find "a group label that instilled group pride and self-esteem."[3] More than just tags, these names can convey powerful imagery and can raise questions of how blacks view themselves.[4] As *Ebony* senior editor Lerone Bennett Jr. explained in 1967: "In periods of reaction and extreme stress, black people usually turn inward. They begin to redefine themselves and they begin to argue seriously about names."[5]

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[1] In December 1988, leaders of seventy-five black groups met in Chicago to discuss a new national black agenda. At the urging of Ramona Edelin, the group agreed to campaign for the adoption of "African-American" as the preferred term of reference.

[2] John Baugh, "The Politicization of Changing Terms of Self-Reference Among American Slave Descendants," *American Speech* 66 (Summer 1991): 133-47; Lerone Bennett Jr, "What's In A Name?" *In Americans From Africa: Old Memories, New Moods,* ed. Peter I. Rose (Chicago: Aldine, 1970), 373, and from *Ebony,* November 1967, 46-52, 54; Ben L. Martin, "From Negro to Black to African American: The Power of Names and Naming," *Political Science Quarterly* 106 (Spring 1991): 83-107; Kelly Miller, "Negroes or Colored People,"*Opportunity: Journal of Negro Life* 15 (May 1937): 142-146; Tom W. Smith, "Changing Racial Labels From "Colored" to "Negro" to "Black" to "African American," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 56 (Winter 1992): 496-514.

[3] Smith, 497. He notes that labels play an important role in defining groups and who belongs to the groups. For blacks more than most other immigrant groups, he says, those labels have been more important and less certain because their enslavement stripped them of their indigenous identities, they lacked a common indigenous term that corresponded to their social definition in America, and that -- as slaves -- blacks were long prevented from developing institutions and community organizations to advance their group identity.

[4] Martin.

[5] Bennett, *Americans From Africa: Old Memories, New Moods,* 377.

The most contentious of these debates came in the late 1960s when black separatists began an often confrontational campaign to replace "Negro" with "black" as the proper term of self-reference. Bennett explained that opponents of the word "Negro" believed that "all black people are affected in the deepest reaches of their being by the collective label" and that "the quest for the right name is the most sophisticated level of finding and projecting one's identity."[6] In 1969, *Newsweek* noted, however, that the issue of race labels is not just about how minorities view themselves, it's also about how whites view them. Included in that equation, the magazine commented, is "a largely unconscious set of perceptions sometimes used by white newsmen to describe what they think they see."[7]

National surveys, news articles and commentaries from the period indicate that the decision to change was slow and agonizing for most people. News media mirrored that angst, sometimes shifting from "black" to "Negro" and back in the same story. As might be expected, black publications were more willing earlier on than white ones to drop Negro, but even for black editors, the decision seemed to be a difficult one.

In light of recent efforts to replace "black" with "African-American" and because a similar discussion seems almost certain to occur again in the next generation or two, it is important to document and analyze the discussion that occurred in the journalism industry in the late 1960s and early 1970s. While the attitudes of individual publications and journalists are sprinkled throughout the literature on racial labeling, there has been no published analysis of the positions and rationales expressed in the industry. The purpose of this paper is to document and analyze the debate among journalists from 1967 through 1971 over which racial identifier to use.

The paper will seek to answer the following questions: 1) What positions, if any, did the trade publications -- the voices of the newspaper industry and of journalism -- take? (2) How did those positions change over time? (3) In the public forum sections of those journals, which opinions dominated at which times? (4) How did all of these correlate to society's changing opinion of acceptable identifiers and to the actual practices of publications? In other words, did the trade journals and the opinions expressed by their readers lead the way or lag behind society and the industry? A qualitative analysis of journalism industry trade journals, specifically *Editor & Publisher,*

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[6] Ibid., 381.

[7] "Identity Crisis," *Newsweek,* 30 June 1969, 62.

The Quill, Columbia Journalism Review, The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, and the *ASNE Proceedings,* from 1967 to 1971 was conducted.[8]

From "African" to "Colored" to "Negro" to "Black"

A number of authors point out that "African" seemed to be a preferred term of self-reference among the first black immigrants and was in use at least as early as the late 1700s.[9] "African" was dropped after 1816, however, when the American Colonization Society was founded to send free Africans "back" to Africa.[10] It was replaced with "coloured" and/or "free persons of colour." "Colored" was the dominant term in the mid- to late nineteenth century, apparently "because it was accepted by whites as well as blacks and was seen as more inclusive, covering mulattos and others of mixed racial ancestry."[11]

In the Civil War and Reconstruction periods, however, there was what one author termed "a sharp reaction to the word colored," and "Negro" was preferred by many black politicians. Explained Bennett in 1967: "For a short spell, the term 'Negro' occupied roughly the same place in Negro life as the words 'blacks' and 'Afro-American' occupy today. In other words, it was a term of militancy, self-consciously used by blackmen defiantly asserting their pride of race."[12]

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[8] These publications were chosen because they represent popular forums for the critical discussion of issues in the industry. Each publication was gleaned for editorials, articles and letters related to racial identifiers for blacks. The years 1967, 1968 and 1969 were chosen for study because several authors note that the issue was most hotly contested in those years and because several notable publications -- including *Ebony, Jet, Time, Newsweek* and the *Boston Globe* -- changed their policies in those years. The years 1970 and 1971 were chosen for a comparison of the discussion by journalists as the term "black" became more accepted in society and in wider use among publications.

[9] Bennett, 376; and Martin, 102.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Smith, 497.

[12] Bennett, 376-377. Though "Colored" retained a commanding position during the post-Reconstruction period, Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington used "Negro" freely. "Afro-American" also was expounded by some as the preferred term of reference.

Toward the end of the century, however, "negro" began to supplant "colored."[13] By the 1930s, "Negro" had become the preferred term,[14] and "Colored" increasingly took on "a somewhat dated or antiquated connotation."[15] While supportive of the word "Negro" in 1937, Kelly Miller acknowledged -- as did Bennett thirty years later -- that "Negro" also had considerable handicaps to overcome, saying it served as "a reminder of the humiliation and degradation through which the race has passed." Miller noted that "Negro" tends to be used as a term of reproach by whites and is associated with the racial epithets "Niggah" and "Nigger."[16]

Despite its drawbacks, "Negro" came to be defined as a new way of thinking about blacks. Wrote Tom W. Smith: "Racial progress and the hopes and aspirations of Blacks . . . were to be captured by the term 'Negro,' and old racial patterns in general and Southern racial traditions in particular were to be left behind with 'Colored.' "[17]

A number of authors note that as "Negro" gained acceptance, there was a second prolonged struggle over its spelling. Advocates of its use insisted that it be capitalized, and newspapers played an important role in that campaign. As early as 1878, a New Orleans newspaper argued that "the French, German, Irish, Dutch, Japanese and other nationalities are honored with a capital letter, but the poor sons of Ham must bear the burden of a small *n*."[18] But it was the *New York Times'* decision in 1930 to capitalize "Negro," *Newsweek* said in 1969, that granted "Negro" "a certain legitimacy in the white community."[19] A *Times* editorial said it was joining "many of the leading Southern newspapers as well as most of the Northern" by adding "Negro" to its style book list of words to be capitalized:

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[13] Ibid. It was then that the first Negro organizations -- the American Negro Academy in 1897 and the National Negro Business League in 1900 -- were founded.

[14] Ibid., 378. Bennett notes that "there was strong opposition to the word 'Negro' from militant radicals like Adam Clayton Powell, who continued to use the word 'black,' and from militant nationalists like Elijah Muhammad, who continued to speak of 'so-called Negroes.' "

[15] Smith, 498. Many organizations dropped the term "Colored" from their titles, while others changed "Colored" to "Negro."

[16] Miller, 145-46.

[17] Smith, 498.

[18] Leon F. Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Knopf, 1979) 541.

[19] "Identity Crisis."

> Races have their capitalized distinction, as have nationalities, sects and cults, tribes and clans. It therefore seems reasonable that a people who had once a proud designation, such as Ethiopians, reaching back into the dawn of history, having come up out of the slavery to which men of English speech subjected them, should now have such recognition as the lifting of the name from the lower case into the upper can give them.
>
> It is not merely a typographical change; it is an act of recognition of racial self-respect for those who have been for generations in the "lower case."[20]

Several authors agree that by the 1950s, "Negro" was the standard term used by black organizations and "was widely accepted by both the Black and White media."[21] But as the civil rights movement progressed in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the word "Negro" came under assault, particularly from black separatists. It was argued that a new name was needed to "break from the past and to shed the remnants of slavery and racial serfdom."[22] Especially influential was Stokely Carmichael, leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, who in speeches in Mississippi in 1966 and in his 1967 book, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation,* urged that "Negro" be abandoned.[23]

According to Bennett in 1967, there were three factions in the argument over which word to use. A large and vocal group aggressively pressed for the use of "Afro-American as the only historically accurate and humanly significant designation," claiming that "Negro" was an inaccurate epithet that "perpetuates the master-slave mentality in the minds of both black and white Americans."[24]

An equally large, but not so vocal, group argued that "Negro" was as accurate and as agreeable to the ear as "black" and "Afro-American." Explained Bennett: "A Negro by any other means, they say, would be as black and as beautiful -- and as segregated. The times, they add, are too crucial for Negroes to dissipate their energy in fratricidal strife over names."[25]

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[20] "Negro With a Capital N," *New York Times,* 30 March 1930, p. 22.

[21] Smith, 499.

[22] Ibid.

[23] "Identity Crisis"; and Smith, 499.

[24] Bennett, 373-74.

[25] Ibid.

A third group -- composed primarily of Black Power advocates -- adopted "Black" for

> black brothers and sisters who are emancipating themselves, and the word "Negro" is used contemptuously for Negroes who are still in Whitey's bed and who still think of themselves and speak of themselves as Negroes. The pro-black contingent contends . . . that names are of the essence of the game of power and control. And they maintain that a change in name will short-circuit the stereotyped thinking patterns that undergird the system of racism in America.[26]

Bennett and others noted that the issue became divisive, pitting different income classes and generations of blacks against each other. Bennett called it a "bitter national controversy" that "rages with religious intensity from the street corners of Harlem to the campuses of Southern colleges" and "has alienated old friends, split national organizations and disrupted national conventions."[27] Prominent leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and NAACP Executive Director Roy Wilkins were heckled and publicly denounced for using the word "Negro."[28] By 1967, several organizations opposed using "Negro," while others dropped it from their titles.[29]

The term "black," however, initially carried with it negative connotations. In addition to being linked to extremists, the word was an insult for many Negroes.[30] A series of studies from 1963 to 1969 found that both Caucasian and Negro college students rated the color name "black" as relatively bad, strong, and passive in 1963.[31]

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid, 373-74.

[28] Bennett, 374; Martin, 92; and John Leo, "Militants Object To 'Negro' Usage, 'Black' or 'Afro-American' Replacing Barred Word," *The New York Times*, 26 February 1968, 31.

[29] Bennett, 374-75. Delegates to the Racism in Education Conference of the American Federation of Teachers unanimously endorsed a resolution calling on all educators and organizations to abandon the "slavery-imposed name 'Negro' for the terms 'African-American' or 'Afro-American.' " And the Negro Teachers Association of New York City became the African-American Teachers Association.

[30] Martin, 90.

[31] Frances Y. Dunham, Richard D. Tucker and John E. Williams, "Changes in the Connotations of Color Names Among Negroes and Caucasians: 1963-1969," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 19 (August 1971): 222-28. Williams considered the 1963 results somewhat surprising, given the long-standing tradition of using color names to refer to racial groups. "How could the Negro subjects give a relatively negative rating to the color name by which they were

But by 1969, the researchers found that for Negro subjects, the term "black" had become more positive, with the change most pronounced among students strongly committed to the Black identity movement. The researchers surmised that the developments of the mid- and late 1960s reflected a dramatic change in "the willingness of Negro Americans to be designated as black. The choice of the term black in preference to other (e.g., Afro-American) seems due, at least in part, to its being opposite to the name (white) by which the majority groups was designated, thus making it particularly effective as an identity term."[32] The researchers noted that slogans such as "Black is Beautiful" and "Black Power" served to counter the "bad" and "passive" connotations attached to black.

From its initial advocacy by progressive and militant elements in the mid-1960s, "black" began to win over an increasing number of converts among mainstream blacks and whites.[33] "Black" was touted as a term of strength and power -- the same assertion that had been made about "Negro" versus "Colored" a generation earlier.[34] "Black" also was favored because of the natural balance or linguistic parallel it provided to the term "white" -- as in black race and white race.[35]

Smith concluded that the proposed switch from "Negro" to "black" -- which had been "hotly debated in 1967 and 1968" -- was largely decided by the early 1970s.[36] He cited a 1974 Roper poll showing that "black" had gained considerable ground, with a clear majority (65 percent) preferring it, and 10 percent favoring "Negro."[37] Wrote Smith:

> As "Black" gained general acceptance, it lost nearly all of its radical connections. Associations with separatism, violence, and political extremism were left behind. But "Black" was not merely a

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often designated?" he asked. Offered as an explanation was that as of 1963, Negroes did not think of themselves as "black persons."

[32] Ibid., 223.

[33] Smith, 502.

[34] Ibid., 501.

[35] Irving Lewis Allen, *Unkind Words: Ethnic Labeling from Redskin to WASP* (New York: Bergin & Garvey, 1990), 71.

[36] Smith, 503.

[37] Roper Poll, June 1974, USRPRR.7046.Q40, Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, Storrs, Conn.

> substitute for "Negro"; the term had helped to instill and maintain a sense of group consciousness, racial pride, and a hope for racial justice.[38]

"Negro" versus "Black" and "Afro-American" in the Media

What role, however, had the media played in swaying public opinion over which racial label to use? And what debate had occurred among journalists over using "Negro" or "black" and "Afro-American"?

One of the first publications to bar "Negro" from its pages was Harlem's *Amsterdam News*, one of the nation's largest black newspapers, which in 1966 decided to use "Afro-American" instead.[39] Said Richard Edwards, assistant managing editor:

> We use it because we are descendants of Africans and because we are Americans. There is a cringing from the word "Negro," especially by the young, because of the opposition into which we were born and because that name was imposed on us. There seems to be violent objection to the term among young people, who link the word "Negro" with Uncle Tom. They seldom use the word "Negro." They use "Black" and "African." Some of them even object to the word "Afro-American," preferring the term "Afram."[40]

Edwards told *The New York Times* in 1968 that letters from readers ran 9-to-1 in favor of the change.[41] A year later, however, *Newsweek* noted that the *Amsterdam News* had dropped "Afro-American" in favor of "black."[42]

During the late 1960s, said Ben L. Martin, references to "blacks" multiplied first in stories about Black Power militants, "even though reporters still used Negro in news writing."[43] In 1967, a notice was posted in the *Boston Globe* newsroom that from then on, Negroes were blacks, but Martin said "most other papers took a year or longer to shift gradually."[44]

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[38] Smith, 503.

[39] Bennett, 375; Leo; "Name-Calling," *Newsweek*, 25 March 1968, 84; and "SDX Harlem Visitors Hear Negro Critics," *Editor & Publisher* (19 August 1967): 15.

[40] Bennett, 375.

[41] Leo, 31.

[42] "Identity Crises."

[43] Martin, 105.

Of the publications researched for this study, only one mention of the issue was made in 1967 -- an *Editor & Publisher (E&P)* column on grammar and word usage in April. Roy H. Copperud, who had since 1954 written the biweekly column "Editorial Workshop" in *E&P* and had been a member of the journalism faculty at the University of Southern California since 1964, dismissed the notion that "Negro" would be replaced by "Afro-American or African-American." He also rejected the idea that such labels can be of importance.[45]

Copperud noted that the previous December, the American Federation of Teachers had demanded "universal substitution of the term Afro-American or African-American for what they called the slavery-imposed term Negro." The organization also sent President Johnson a letter urging him to make the substitution in speeches and statements. Said Copperud:

> Even if the President had acceded to this request, the chances of any widespread adoption of Afro-American or African-American are negligible. Changes in general usage are not brought about in this way, nor by any other known means, and teachers, above all, should understand enough about language to realize this. Negro is too convenient to be displaced by the relatively cumbersome substitutes proposed. But ingrained, long-established habit offers even more powerful resistance to any such change."[46]

Not mentioned by Copperud was the fact that "Negro" itself had replaced "colored."

Copperud said there was no evidence that Negro was slavery-imposed, saying the term "derives ultimately from the Latin for black, which in essence is no more derogatory than white, red, yellow, or brown in reference to race. Derogatory connotations are a matter of attitude, and the idea that attitudes can be changed by a change of name is one of the oldest and most pathetic of delusions."[47]

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Roy H. Copperud, "Pattern in Black and White," *Editor & Publisher* (8 April 1967): 37.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid.

No reader reaction to Copperud's column was published. In contrast, his column July 8 about splitting headlines drew two letters to the editors, followed by two more of his columns on the subject and then another published response from a reader.

While journalistic circles heard no more than the whisper of a debate in 1967 over which racial identifier to use, the industry listened to a full conversation in 1968. It was not a discussion divided along racial lines, though, as both blacks and whites argued for and against any change.

In January, Copperud wrote a column opposing "black" and "Afro-American." Indeed, he seemed surprised that "Negroes" would not wish to be called by that name. He referred to the insistence by "militant Negroes" that they be called "black or Afro-American" as "a curious development having to do with language [that] has grown out of the civil rights movement." He wrote:

> Inexplicably, they have decided that there is something disparaging, or perhaps suggesting subservience, about Negro. The fact is, however, that no term is as nearly neutral as Negro; to most people of all colors, it merely identifies, and is neither complimentary nor derogatory. Black, on the other hand, does carry a hint of disparagement or perhaps of subordination. This connotation comes from its use by whites in Africa, dating from the colonial era, to refer to native bearers and other servants. At best, it was patronizing. That American Negroes should have decided black is preferable to Negro is as surprising as if American Indians should demand to be called redskins, or Chinese to be called Chinks.
>
> As for Afro-American, the term is too inconvenient and, perhaps, hifalutin to gain any wide acceptance. Where it is used, it will sound self-conscious and stilted. Negro is too popular to be displaced by anything. But Afro-American does have dignity, and if the militants had settled on it alone they would have had a better case.[48]

In sharp contrast to Copperud's columns was a March 1968 commentary in *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors* (ASNE).[49] Where Copperud saw no chance of success for the implementation of "black or Afro-American," Ralph W. Conant told ASNE members that black militants

> are almost certain to persuade Negroes to accept black as a positive symbol of common purpose. The marginal doubters were won over in the

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[48] Roy H. Copperud, "Pattern in Black and White," *Editor & Publisher* (20 January 1968): 36.

[49] Ralph W. Conant, "Black or Negro? The New Identity," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors* (March 1968): 3-4. Conant was associate director of the Lamberg Center for the Study of Violence at Brandeis University.

> crescendo of ghetto uprisings in 1967. Conservative elements will be convinced by the tone and character of white response as it takes shape in policy developments during the period ahead.[50]

While Copperud characterized the belief that changing names can change attitudes as "one of the oldest and most pathetic of delusions," Conant embraced the notion, saying militant blacks were insisting "on a new label to which such valued attributes as self-esteem and self-determination can be attached." He wrote:

> These blacks . . . know the term 'Negro' means black, but they also know better than we whites that 'Negro' is a white label, and to them a label that is synonymous with inferior status, frustrated hopes and debilitating daily confrontations with white racism. Besides that, the terms 'nigger' and 'nigra' are blatantly derogatory derivations of 'Negro' -- and sometimes it is hard to distinguish the derivatives from the original in spoken usage.[51]

Conant -- a white -- saw the term "black" as an integral part of a black unity movement -- a move toward pride in blackness and racial identity. He said:

> The question of 'black' versus 'Negro' is, in the end, an issue of identity, which is to say, self-esteem. Because the term Negro in America still connotes innate or positional inferiority to whites and blacks alike, black leaders have the right, indeed the duty, to invoke a term which can serve as an authentic rallying point for a movement in which an oppressed people can find a new identity and a new sense of common purpose.
>
> For black leaders, to do less, would be to do nothing; and for influential whites, to fail in all means of encouragement and support would be to invite a further polarization of black-white relations.[52]

Much like the *New York Times'* decision to capitalize "Negro" had granted that word legitimacy, Conant wanted the white press to substitute "black" for "Negro" "even before the new term has been fully accepted in the black community," saying that one reason black conservatives resist the new term is "how these people see the term used in the white community." Substituting the terms in the white news media "will help endow 'black' with a positive (socially prestigious) connotation." He concluded:

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[50] Ibid., 3.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 4.

> The term 'Negro' will gradually fall into disuse except when a negative connotation is intended (as it usually is now). Wide use of 'black' (or some variation) in the white press will help popularize the term in the white community and release whites from the term 'Negro' which has embarrassingly negative connotations even when such a connotation is unintended.[53]

Juxtaposed physically and philosophically to Conant's two-page commentary was a full-page response from two Negroes: Whitney M. Young Jr., executive director of the National Urban League, and former baseball player Jackie Robinson, then on the staff of the New York governor. Both men characterized the proposed switch to "black" as a matter of semantics, not as an effort that would produce meaningful changes in the lives of Negroes.[54] Said Young:

> Negroes are starving in the Mississippi Delta, going jobless in Chicago and their children are bitten by rats in Harlem, but a handful of extremists with a load of guilt-ridden whites as camp followers want to discuss semantics. Given a racist society and intolerable burdens of discrimination and exploitation, how long will it take for the term 'black' to signify something inferior? Let's work together to change social and economic conditions and leave terminology to pedants.[55]

"Negro" had not been forced upon Negroes by white society, Young said, noting that the Urban League and others had "fought long and hard to establish the word 'Negro' as a replacement for other terms which had connotations of inferiority (like 'blacks'). In fact, once that battle was won, we had to fight it all over again to get the 'n' changed to 'N,' a decency still not universally adopted by some newspapers."[56]

Young questioned what would happen "if the small group favoring 'blacks' changes its mind. After all, only last year their favorite term was 'Afro-Americans.' Think of all the newspaper style books that will have to be revised." He also chided Conant for urging whites to use "blacks" even before most Negroes accepted the term.

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Jackie Robinson, "Juggling Words," and Whitney M. Young Jr., "Let's Leave Terminology to the Pedants," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors* (March 1968): 5.

[55] Young, 5.

[56] Ibid.

"If that isn't white people dictating to Negroes what they shall be called, I don't know what is."[57]

If "Negro" has implications of inferiority, Young said, it is "because Negroes hold an inferior status in a racist country." He concluded:

> It is within the power of white society to change this status. It is not within the power of white society to define what Negroes shall be called. I suggest to their white well-wishers that the energy they are expending in swaying with every passing breeze of hot air that comes from the ghetto can be put to better use by fighting for the jobs, homes and education Negroes need.[58]

Robinson, in a two-paragraph response, echoed Young, saying he took pride in being a Negro and in being called a Negro. "Our thrust should be directed toward solving the [racial] problem, but I do not believe we'll solve it by juggling words."[59]

The same month as *The Bulletin* commentaries, an opposite reaction to Copperud's column was published in *E&P*. Elinor Diane Harvin, a public relations staff assistant for the telephone company in Detroit, said it was not inexplicable that black Americans wanted to "disinherit the moniker Negro" in favor of "black."

> It's part of the quest for self-identity, that precious, subtle pride that was so painstakingly crushed in slavery, and has been suppressed all these decades. It goes along with the rejection of whitey's insistence that straight hair is better than kinky hair, thin lips are better than thick lips, white skin is better than dark skin.
>
> It's a way of saying, "Hold on, baby. White is not better than black. We see who we are. Black is on the same level as white. We will define who we are and how much we're worth. You're not going to tell us who we are or who we have to be anymore." And one doesn't have to be a radical to feel this.[60]

Harvin noted that at first, blacks had no control over what they were called. "As they felt a little freer they begged to be called by a real name ('Negro' -- with a capital

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Robinson.

[60] Elinor Diane Harvin, "Neutral Term," *Editor & Publisher* (16 March 1968): 7.

'N'). Now blacks are nearing the confrontation stage, and insist on fighting as equals, and insist on telling the opponents who they are."[61]

Harvin also wrote that although the black press had "already swung overwhelmingly in favor of the 'new' language," black editors were "still using 'Negro' when they need a nice 'neutral' word" -- an apparent reference to *Jet* magazine's decision to keep using "Negro," despite poll results in early 1968 showing the word ranked third behind "Afro-American" and "black" as the term most preferred by the magazine's readers.[62] *Jet* continued to use "Negro" on the theory that even if it was not the first choice, it would not offend anyone.[63]

A national poll that year indicated that "black" was still being met with resistance from the people it was intended to represent. According to a June 1968 Gallup Poll, sixty-nine percent of Americans of African descent favored "Negro," compared to less than six percent for "black" and fifteen percent for "Afro-American."[64]

If not all black editors were committed to the change, even less persuaded were whites, who were receiving conflicting messages from the black community. For example, *E&P* readers learned that when the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) barred the *Columbus Dispatch* from covering its 1968 annual convention because the newspaper continued to use "Negro" in reference to the meeting, *Dispatch* City Editor Hal Schellkopf said: "There was no other word that we could use without offending more Negroes than there are in CORE. We called up some of our own Negro leaders and they told us to go on using 'Negro,' as we always have and as other papers continue to do."[65]

Schellkopf said the newspaper would continue using "Negro" because it was the proper word and because "it would be improper for the newspaper to be dictated to by any group on the style it followed."[66]

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[61] Ibid.

[62] Leo; and "Name-Calling." Separate surveys by *Jet* and *Ebony* in early 1968 had the same findings. *Jet* magazine polled 1,400 of its readers; thirty-seven percent chose Afro-American, twenty-two percent black and eighteen percent Negro.

[63] "Name-Calling."

[64] Martin, 94.

[65] "CORE Protests Use of 'Negro,' " *Editor & Publisher* (13 July 1968): 11.

[66] Ibid.

In March 1968 -- the same month as Copperud's and Conant's columns -- *Newsweek* told its readers: "Editors of white publications have been far more reluctant to give up the word 'Negro' (among them, *The New York Times, The Washington Post,* the *Associated Press* and *United Press International*)." Gradually, however, the magazine noted, "even the white press is substituting 'black' for 'Negro.' "[67] *Newsweek* quoted UPI editor Roger Tatarian, "It's not forbidden to say black, but we generally say Negro."[68]

In December, an *E&P* article headlined "Controversy still boils over 'black' and 'Negro' " told its audience that UPI was not following "any hard and fast rule" on when to use "black" or "Negro" in a news story. Said UPI Managing Editor H. L. Stevenson:

> Periodically, we are asked about our preferred style. The subject is not covered in our Stylebook and I doubt if we will attempt to formulate a rule any time soon.
>
> We, too, use the word interchangeably. Negro is most often used in describing individuals, where it is pertinant. Our reporters who examine the ills of the slums often write of the 'black ghetto' and in the same dispatch quote an individual 'Negro leader.' We use lower case in referring to the 'black power' movement.[69]

In 1969, *E&P* was the only trade publication studied in which the question of racial identifiers was mentioned, and both times it was in a Copperud column. In March, he acknowledged that "black" -- despite his previous predictions that it would fail to catch on -- had indeed become an accepted term of reference. He explained:

> Regardless of connotations, efforts by any group to specify the terminology to be applied to them almost always come to nothing, But this instance has been an astonishing exception. In a very short time, as these things go, black has become established on a very nearly equal footing with Negro.[70]

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[67] *Newsweek* commented that "colored," a term associated with the segregated 1930s, had been largely phased out, with one notable exception -- the Scripps-Howard *Washington Daily News,* which used the word in crime stories.

[68] "Name-Calling."

[69] "Controvesy still boils over 'black' and 'Negro,' " *Editor & Publisher* (28 December 1968): 25.

[70] Roy H. Copperud, "The blacks and the whites," *Editor & Publisher* (8 March 1969): 24.

After noting that the term was not necessarily restricted to references of militants, Copperud said:

> Black has become virtually interchangeable with Negro in publications of all kinds -- newspapers, magazines, and books, including those of the highest standards of editing. At the same time, Negro shows no signs of being driven out of business. Instead of one term to refer to the black race, we now have two in common use.[71]

He said no prescience was required to foresee that Afro-American would be rejected "because it is too cumbersome." He said, however, that he could not explain why the effort to establish "black" has succeeded; he even solicited explanations from readers. He conjectured, though, that perhaps "black" was used because it is monosyllabic. "Perhaps, too," he said, "some writers and editors take satisfaction in using it because they consider it derogatory."[72]

If any of Copperud's readers sent him their thoughts on the subject, none of the letters was published. At the end of a column four months later, though, Copperud noted a *Newsweek* poll showing that "Negro" remained the generally preferred term among members of that race.[73]

The *Newsweek* poll, reported in June 1969, indicated that "Negro" -- not "black" was still the most popular choice. In fact, "Black" ranked third -- behind "Negro" and "Colored People," with 19 percent of the respondents favoring "Black." However, "Negro" was chosen only by a plurality -- not a majority -- garnering support from 38 percent of those surveyed. The poll also indicated that "Black" "had a great vogue among the Northern city-dwellers, the young and the relatively affluent."[74]

Just as the poll indicated that "black" had gained ground among Negroes since the 1968 Gallup Poll, the magazine also told the nation -- as Copperud had told *E&P's* circle of readers three months earlier -- that the term was gaining acceptance among print and broadcast journalists. "Black, a word that only a few years ago was considered contemptuous," was being used interchangeably with "Negro," *Newsweek* said, and the momentum was shifting to "black."

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[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Roy H. Copperud, "Was it a cat?" *Editor & Publisher* (26 July 1969): 43.

[74] "Angry -- But They Still Have A Dream," *Newsweek*, 30 June 1969, 20. Twenty percent chose "Colored People." However, "Colored People" had the most negative rating, with thirty-one percent saying they liked it the least. "Black" was favored least by twenty-five percent, and "Negro" was least liked by eleven percent.

In March 1968 and again in June 1969, *Newsweek* credited black journalists with pushing for the change in white-dominated newsrooms, saying that "on most 'white' publications, editors are taking their cue from black reporters."[75] Said Gale Cook, city editor of *The San Francisco Examiner,* in 1968: "I was against black at first, but then I became convinced by one of our Negro staffers that it was right to use it."[76] In 1969, Ed Cony, managing editor of *The Wall Street Journal,* said: "One of our black reporters turned in a story and in the rewrite where he had used black it was changed to Negro. When he saw the rewrite he said he'd like all those Negroes changed back to blacks and we did it."[77]

Echoing to the country the reasons explained by Elinor Diane Harvin to the journalism industry in 1968, black journalists told *Newsweek* they preferred "black" to "Negro" because of the former's prominence among young people and the latter's connotation with "Uncle Toms." Said Hans Massaquoi, managing editor of *Ebony*: "At one time it didn't matter to me whether I was called Negro or black. But now it does matter and I prefer to be called black. As I read copy, I am aware that when certain writers say Negro they are describing someone they see as a Negro -- an Uncle Tom." And, said Henry Hampton, a political commentator for WGHB in Boston: "Black is a much more honest word for us. It conjures a state of mind to cope with the long tradition of what the word used to mean. Black used to be a word that was used against us. Now we've turned it around and made it into a positive weapon."[78]

In 1970, the question of whether to use "black" or "Negro" was mentioned only once in the trade publications studied -- an *E&P* article (by one of the researchers) on a survey revealing that most daily newspapers did not identify people by race in criminal arrest or society page stories.[79] The survey by the San Diego State College Journalism Department also asked editors which racial identifier -- if any -- they would use in a story favorable about Negroes.[80] Thirty-nine -- or 63 percent -- of the 62 respondents said they would choose between the two.[81] Explained a Kansas editor: "Generally, we use the identification we feel the subject would use himself. If he's a militant we'll use black. If he's a moderate, we'll use Negro. Sometimes we'll use the two terms in the same story."

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[75] "Identity Crisis."

[76] "Name-Calling."

[77] "Identity Crisis."

[78] Ibid.

[79] John Meyers, "Race Identification Varies With Editors," *Editor & Publisher* (27 June 1970): 18.

In 1971, the question of using "black" or "Negro" again surfaced only as part of discussions on other topics. Syndicated columnist Garry Wills, in a February *Bulletin* commentary on obscenity and civility, used racial labels to explain the importance of nuance. He wrote:

> Are we to speak of 'colored people,' or 'Negroes' (or 'negroes') or "blacks"? If the black community's leaders refer to themselves as blacks, it is . . . not a question of ideology, but of ordinary civility, to address them in that style. In other words, it is the rule in a truly polite society to defer to other people's standards of decorum wherever possible, without implying any substantial agreement (or disagreement) with them.[82]

In September, "black" versus "Negro" arose tangentially in a Copperud-column debate over the use of "Mexican-American" and "Chicano." Copperud criticized a Texas elementary school librarian for saying that the term "Chicano" was a "degrading identification similar to the term Nigger stamped on the Negroes more than 100 years ago." Copperud said "Chicano" was popularized by Mexican-Americans and "proudly borne, just as many Negroes now prefer to be known as blacks."[83]

Conclusion

For the most part, the trade publications remained silent regarding which racial identifier, "Negro" or "black," to use. Of the five publications studied, three of them -- *Columbia Journalism Review, The Quill,* and the *ASNE Proceedings* contained not one word on the subject from 1967 through 1971. Even those that dealt with the topic -- *E&P* and the ASNE's *Bulletin* -- offered no official positions.

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[80] Term used by the article's author.

[81] Thirteen, or twenty-one percent, of the editors said they would use only "Negro," while four of them, or six percent, said only "black" would be used.

[82] Garry Wills, "The new civility," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors* (February 1971): 7-10, 8.

[83] Roy H. Copperud, "Mexican Mixup," *Editor & Publisher* (25 September 1971): 38.

However, the rationales that were presented in *E&P's* and *The Bulletin's* coverage, commentaries and readers' letters mirrored the debate occurring in society. For instance, those who preferred to be called "black" expressed their viewpoint that the term represented self-esteem and self-determination equal to those of whites. Those who still labeled themselves as "Negroes" made it clear that they saw the issue as a matter of semantics, not as a meaningful effort to improve their lives.

Polls in 1968 and 1969 indicated a gradual acceptance of the term "black" among those the word was intended to represent. Even for black editors, the decision to leave behind "Negro" for "black" was difficult -- as evidenced by *Jet's* decision to stick with "Negro" even though the magazine's readers ranked it third behind "Afro-American" and "black."[84] For white editors -- many of whom were already reluctant "to be dictated to by any group on the style" they used[85] -- the conflicting message from the black community left them even more unsure of which term to choose. As a result, "Negro" and "black" were often used interchangeably, with the selection depending on the preference of the person being described.

Reflective of these white editors' opinions -- and perhaps even those of conservative Negroes -- was Roy H. Copperud's columns in *E&P*. In 1967 and 1968, he resisted the change, dismissing the notion that attitudes can be changed with a change of names as "one of the oldest and most pathetic of delusions."[86] By 1971, however, he had grudgingly accepted that for many people, the term "black" was an important symbol of pride.[87]

Also following the general trend in society was the time period in which the journalism trade journals most dealt with the issue. Eight of the fourteen references found in the trade publications studied were from 1968. According to one author, this was in the midst of when the question was being "hotly debated" elsewhere in the country.[88] By the early 1970s, the author said, the issue was largely decided.

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[84] Leo; and "Name-Calling."

[85] "CORE Protests Use of 'Negro.' "

[86] Copperud, "Pattern in Black and White."

[87] Copperud, "Mexican Mixup."

[88] Smith, 503.

Correspondingly, the discussion about using "black" or "Negro" surfaced in the trade publications in 1970 and 1971 only as part of other debates.

It is clear from these findings that the journalism industry as a whole neither led the way nor dragged behind public opinion on the question of whether "Negro" or "black" should be the preferred term of reference. Instead, the rationales presented in the industry's most popular forums for critical discussion of issues in journalism paralleled society's general angst over how to define a race of people.

HOSTILE CROWDS, HOMOSEXUAL ACTIVISTS AND AIDS VICTIMS: MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS COVER GAY LIBERATION

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ABSTRACT -- Hostile Crowds, Homosexual Activists and AIDS Victims: Mainstream Newspapers Cover Gay Liberation

Modern discourse on sociological theories of deviance generally suggests that marginalized or deviant groups and subcultures will attempt to change the image the public has of them by gaining access to the media to expose myths about themselves that perpetuate marginalizing stereotypes. Presumably, this is the process the lesbian and gay liberation movement has been struggling through since the Stonewall Inn riots in 1969, widely held to be the cataclysmic event from whence erupted the gay rights movement. At least, this is how Stonewall has been romanticized during the last twenty-six years. Indexed in the *New York Times Index* under the heading of "Hotels," the Stonewall riots could perhaps be seen as the "Trojan Horse" of the gay rights movement (although it was an unplanned surprise). The *Times* clearly did not suspect it would amount to much more than your average gay bar raid. What, if anything, were they saying in San Francisco, where gay men and lesbians had already taken to the street two or three years before? Or in middle America, where the word "homosexual" was uttered primarily in hushed tones? The purpose of this paper is to verify the abstract notion that acceptance of a social movement and coverage of that movement are somehow related. This is accomplished by examining mainstream newspaper coverage of three major events in the gay liberation movement -- Stonewall, the march on Washington in 1979 and the march on Washington in 1987 -- to detect evidence of a shift in how these events were covered.

Hostile Crowds, Homosexual Activists and AIDS Victims: Mainstream Newspapers Cover Gay Liberation

The riot that took place at the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street in New York in the wee hours of the morning on June 28, 1969, is widely believed to be the cataclysmic event from whence erupted the gay rights movement, the event that led millions of gay persons to break free of the shackles of societal oppression. For so long so many gay men and lesbians had seemed to accept with resignation society's pronouncement of their mental illness and social maladjustment. At last, having witnessed some of their own defiantly stand up to police and refuse to take any more of their abuse and harassment, lesbians and gay men would never again need to be the cowed and broken individuals they had been for so long.

At least, this is how Stonewall has been romanticized over the course of the last twenty-six years. It has become "a metaphor for emergence, visibility and pride."[1] But what was Stonewall when it happened? Even if it meant something to gay persons in New York, what did it mean to the rest of America? Indexed in the *New York Times Index* under the heading of "Hotels," the Stonewall riot could perhaps be seen as the "Trojan Horse" of the gay rights movement (although it was an unplanned surprise). The *Times* clearly did not suspect it would amount to much more than your average gay bar raid. What were they saying in San Francisco, where gay men and lesbians had already taken to the streets two or three years before the Stonewall incident? What was the sentiment in middle America, where reference to gay persons was probably rarely uttered? Furthermore, if Stonewall was the beginning of a gay rights movement, would mainstream newspapers take gay persons more seriously when they marched on the nation's capital 10 and 18 years later, after the movement was well underway?

According sociological deviance theory, gaining media attention is often a prerequisite to the granting of recognition or acceptance by society. Thus, movements

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[1] Andrew Kopkind, "After Stonewall," *The Nation*, July 4, 1994, 4.

"depend on the media to generate public sympathy for their challenge."[2] Modern discourse on sociological theories of deviance generally suggests that marginalized or deviant groups and subcultures will attempt to change the image the public has of them, achieving that alteration "through moral entrepreneurship...[exposing] the myths that perpetuate such views."[3] Presumably, this is the process the lesbian and gay liberation movement has been struggling through at least since the Stonewall Inn riots. Assuming gay persons have made some gains in terms of recognition and acceptance since the Stonewall Inn riots, is there evidence *in news coverage* of gay men and lesbians of that shift in social acceptance?

If the events at the Stonewall Inn in 1969 gave birth to a gay liberation movement (even if only symbolically), they also certainly gave birth to volumes of descriptive, analytic and oral histories about their occurrence. There is no shortage of literature describing the tremendous impact Stonewall is said to have had on the hearts, minds and souls of an entire generation of gay men and lesbians, as well as the homosexual rights movement itself. In fact, the sheer volume of such literature seems to have caused the impact of the events at the Stonewall to take on mythic and legendary proportions.[4]

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[2] William A. Gamson and Gadi Wolfsfeld, "Movements and Media as Interacting Systems," *Annals of the American Association of Political and Social Science* 528 (July 1993): 116.

[3] To accomplish this task, groups need to communicate with the public -- either one-on-one (speeches and rallies), through the production of their own literature and/or newspapers, or by gaining attention in the mainstream media (Erdwin H. Pfuhl and Stuart Henry, *The Deviance Process* [New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1993], 220). The relationship between the media and a given social movement or group has been described as a "transaction between two complicated systems of actors with complex internal relationships" and the role of media coverage is at least partly to "validate that the movement is an important player" in the social arena (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, "Movements and Media," 115-116). W. Lance Bennett and Todd Gitlin have explored the role of the news media in social change extensively (W. Lance Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, 3d. ed. [White Plains, N.Y.: Longman Publishers, 1996]; and Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching* [Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1980]). According to sociologist Edwin M. Schur, "media coverage becomes a key element, shaping and interacting with public attitudes" (Edwin M. Schur, *The Politics of Deviance: Stigma Contests and the Uses of Power* [Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1980], 19). Also, although their work has been primarily focused on Canadian press, Richard V. Ericson, Patricia M. Baranek and Janet B.L. Chan have concluded that journalists are "central agents in the social construction of reality about deviance and control," shaping "the moral boundaries and contours of social order, providing an ongoing articulation of our senses of propriety and impropriety, stability and change, order and crises" (Richard V. Ericson, Patricia M. Baranek and Janet B.L. Chan, *Visualizing Deviance* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987], 356).

[4] Robert L. Pela, "Stonewall's Eyewitnesses," *The Advocate*, May 3, 1994, 53.

Despite this tremendous volume of literature, however, very little of it addresses the question of how newspapers reported the event at the time.[5] Most accounts, if they include any discussion of coverage of Stonewall at all, focus on the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice*.[6] Even less has been written about coverage of the 1979 and 1987 marches on Washington. It is listed among other events in the gay and lesbian rights movement, but usually only in passing.[7] Further, there has been quite a lot written about news coverage of gay men and lesbians generally. However, precious little of it is scholarly in nature. Most of it tends to be found in news magazines or the gay press.[8] What little scholarly research has been done in this area falls into one of three categories: old, criminal psychology materials from the 1940s and '50s, wherein the focus is on sex crimes and sex offenders;[9] analysis of the British or Canadian press;[10] or recent, non-historical studies.[11]

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[5] Many newspapers have recounted the events on milestone anniversaries since Stonewall, but little has been written about how they reacted at the time. What little can be found is buried within gay liberation histories, not amounting to more than a page of discussion in the most generous treatments. Rodger Streitmatter, for example, briefly discussed the *New York Times, New York News Day* and *Village Voice* coverage of the Stonewall riots in his book about the lesbian and gay press in America. In his account, Streitmatter describes the *Times'* coverage as sending out the message "that gays were enemies of civilized society," no change, he noted, from past characterizations of gay people. He described the *Village Voice* coverage as having "joined the mockery" and described mainstream coverage generally as being biased and lacking in perspective (Rodger Streitmatter, *Unspeakable: the Rise of the Gay and Lesbian Press in America* [Boston: Faber and Faber Inc., 1995], 119).

[6] *See*, for example, Leigh W. Rutledge, *The Gay Decades* (New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1992), 2-3; Paul Berman, "Democracy and Homosexuality," *The New Republic*, December 20, 1993, 24; Mark Thompson, ed., *Long Road to Freedom: The Advocate History of the Gay and Lesbian Movement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 17-19; and Stephen Jeffrey-Poulter, *Peers, Queers & Commons: The Struggle for Gay Law Reform from 1950 to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1991), 99. Donn Teal's book includes an in-depth account of the riots that also includes in its description headlines and coverage found in the *New York Mattachine Newsletter* (Donn Teal, *The Gay Militants* [New York: Stein and Day Publishers, 1971], 20). Richard Goldstein made passing mention of "extensive coverage by New York dailies" in his 1993 *New York* article on the riots, but does not detail that coverage nor reveal exactly to which "New York dailies" he was referring" (Richard Goldstein, "Stonewall Riots," *New York*, April 19, 1993, 122).

[7] There has been only one scholarly analysis of such coverage, a narrow study by Jeffrey Nelson that examined coverage in the *New York Times, Washington Post, Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *Chicago Tribune*. The analysis focuses largely on the length and placement of articles about the march, detailing what percentage of which page was given over to coverage and which photos were used. Nelson concludes there were no negative innuendoes or depictions in the coverage. He does so without context, however, lacking any comparative data -- about earlier or later coverage of gay men and lesbians -- that might render his findings more meaningful (Jeffrey Nelson, "Media Reaction to the 1979 Gay March on Washington," in James W. Chesebro, ed. *Gayspeak: Gay Male & Lesbian Communication* [New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1981]).

[8] Such articles include: R. Alfred, "Lesbian bites dog, more at 11: Gays in the News," *Advocate*, January 2, 1982, 31; S. Byron, "Gay News and the *New York Times*: An Indelicate Balance," *Village Voice*, September 21, 1972, 1, 24, 26; G. Destefano, "*The New York Times* vs. Gay America," *Advocate*, December 9, 1986, 42; Craig Davidson, "Can We End Media Bias Against Gays?" *USA Today Magazine*, November, 1991, 72; E.J. Graff, "Not a Ladies' Auxiliary," *Progressive*, October, 1993, 13; and John Purnell, "All the (Gay) News That's Fit to Print," *Advocate*, June 30, 1992, 65.

The purpose of this paper is to verify the abstract notion that acceptance of a social movement and coverage of that movement are somehow related. This will be accomplished through an examination of how eight mainstream newspapers covered three major events in the gay liberation movement -- the Stonewall Inn riots, the march on Washington in 1979 and the march on Washington in 1987. By using a quantitative and qualitative analysis of newspaper coverage of gay men and lesbians over time, this study is intended to detect any shift in treatment that might indicate a shift in the status of the gay liberation movement, thereby illustrating the concept of media and social movements as interacting systems. What evidence of an increase in societal acceptance of gay persons and/or the gay rights movement, in other words, can be found through an examination of mainstream newspaper coverage? An increase in coverage from one event to the next, for example, is assumed to be an indication of increased acceptance, as is better story placement (page one, as opposed to page twenty-one) and more in-depth analysis of gay and lesbian concerns.

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[9] E.A. Coon, "Homosexuality in the News," *Archives of Criminal Psychodynamics* 2 (1957): 843-865; and F.A. McHenry, "A Note of Homosexuality, Crime and the Newspapers," *Journal of Criminal Psychopathology* 2 (1941): 533-548.

[10] Frank Pearce, "How to be Immoral and Ill, Pathetic and Dangerous, All at the Same Time: Mass Media and the Homosexual," in Stanley Cohen and Jock Young, eds., *The Manufacture of News* (London: Constable, 1973), 284-300; and Susan Hemmings, "Horrific Practices: How Lesbians Were Presented in the Newspapers of 1978," in Gay Left Collective, ed., *Homosexuality, Power & Politics* (New York: Allison and Busby Ltd., 1980), 157-171.

[11] Only one article of this type has been located; it examined editors' and reporters' opinions of today's coverage of gay and lesbian issues (Joseph P. Bernt and Marilyn S. Greenwald, "Differing Views of Senior Editors and Gay/Lesbian Journalists Regarding Newspaper Coverage of the Gay and Lesbian Community," *Newspaper Research Journal* 13 [Fall, 1992]: 99-111). It appears the only historical piece that looks at the coverage of lesbians and gay men in mainstream newspapers is an unpublished study by Howard Voland ("Deviates Defoliated: Lesbians and Gay Men Break into Mainstream Publicity, 1969," Paper presented to the Lesbian, Gay and Family Diversity Interest Group of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, Mo., August 11-14, 1993). Voland studied only those publications for which he could obtain indexes, but studied their coverage of gay men and lesbians for an entire year and identified several "framing" devices he detected in the coverage. His study is primarily descriptive and could be effectively built upon by, for instance, looking for the same framing techniques in later years.

Background

One cannot proceed to trace this sort of shift in public perception without first describing a few of the events that have accompanied such a shift (should it be found to exist). The night of June 27, 1969, was not, in fact, a night just like any other in Greenwich Village. Several gay bars had been raided in recent weeks, and thousands of gay men had just paid their last respects to Judy Garland, who had become, for whatever reason, a sort of "icon of gay camp."[12] In addition, the event took place against a backdrop of student protest against the war in Vietnam and the recent rise of the violent Black Panther movement. These were tumultuous times, and gay men were feeling more harassed than usual.

The Stonewall was a disgusting place, at best. Owned by the Mafia, the bar was a favorite hangout of drag queens, "chicken hawks,"[13] and a few lesbians. Maggie Jigs, the bartender, dealt drugs. There was no running water behind the bar, so used glasses were merely dipped in "a vat of stale water" and then reused.[14] Usually, when the police raided the Stonewall (or any gay bar, for that matter), the clientele filed out of the bar peacefully. But when the police escorted the clientele out of the Stonewall Inn around 1:30 a.m. on this particular Friday night, a crowd began to gather outside. While police were loading the transvestites into the paddy wagon, one of them apparently planted her foot in one of the officers' chests, whereupon they all leaped out of the wagon, and bottles and stones began flying everywhere.[15]

This was not the first violent incident involving gay persons and police. In San Francisco, as early as 1966, three days of riots had followed another police raid on a gay bar. News of those riots did not spread through the nation (in the gay or mainstream press) the way news of Stonewall spread immediately through the gay press. The 1966 riots did not touch off the indignant, soaring defiance that the riots on Christopher Street did in 1969. Some have theorized that the 1966 incident took place in "too staid a time," and that the tumultuous social backdrop present during the Stonewall riots is mostly responsible for its lasting impact because "life was a loudspeaker that year."[16]

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[12] Eloise Salholz, et al., "Stonewall," *Newsweek*, July 3, 1989, 57. *See also*, Goldstein, "Stonewall Riots," 120; Rutledge, *Gay Decades*; and Streitmatter, *Unspeakable*, 119.

[13] A gay slang term referring to older men who lusted after underage boys.

[14] Streitmatter, *Unspeakable*, 119; and Berman, "Democracy and Homosexuality," 22.

[15] Berman, "Democracy and Homosexuality," 24;

Whatever the reason or reasons, and for better or for worse,[17] gay liberation did see a new birth after Stonewall. The conservative approach of the Mattachine Society was put on hold as the younger gay crowd tested their invincibility. As poet Allen Ginsburg noted at the time, they had lost "that wounded look that fags all had ten years ago."[18] Just 10 days after the initial raid on the Stonewall, the Mattachine Action Committee (which really splintered off and operated separately from the Mattachine Society) announced the first "Homosexual Liberation Meeting."[19] In the year or two that followed the gay press erupted throughout the country. According to historian Rodger Streitmatter, "after the apocalyptic Stonewall impulse, the press erupted in so many directions that it is impossible to document when each publication was founded, how long it existed, or who edited it."[20]

The gay liberation movement had begun in earnest. In the coming years, the movement would witness the repeal of sodomy laws in many states, the introduction of legislation to prohibit discrimination against lesbians and gay men, the "normalizing" of homosexuality by the American Psychiatric Association and the American Psychological

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[16] Ibid.

[17] At least one scholar in 1983 viewed this period after Stonewall with dismay, saying the movement was "temporarily off track" in following the misguided radicalism of American youth and the identity politics of the Far Left. *See* James B. Levin, *Reflections on the American Homosexual Rights Movement* (New York: The Scholarship Committee, Gay Academic Union of New York City, 1983), 33-44.

[18] Teal, *Gay Militants*, 23.

[19] Ibid., 32.

[20] Streitmatter, *Unspeakable*, 117.

Association, and the introduction of a federal Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Bill. Of course, they would also see many setbacks along the way, such as the failure of that federal Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Bill, the reinstatement of several repealed sodomy laws and the proposal of the "Briggs Initiative" in California, which provided for "the firing of all gay and lesbian teachers and all teachers who allude to homosexual behavior positively in the classroom."[21]

The first national Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights March on Washington on October 14, 1979, according to organizers, drew more than 100,000 participants.[22] It was seen as a "climax of the decade-long gay liberation movement,"[23] and participants followed their Sunday march with a day of lobbying at the Capitol. When gay persons marched on the nation's capital again on October 11, 1987, the crowd had grown. March organizers estimated the crowd at 650,000 while U.S. Park Police put the crowd at 200,000 and one commentator in the conservative magazine *National Review* cynically concluded that therefore there could not have been more than 100,000 participants.[24] Accompanying the march in 1987 was a full week of activity for those who had made the journey to Washington, D.C., including the display of the AIDS quilt, a mass wedding on the steps of the Internal Revenue Service Building, and a protest at the U.S. Supreme Court of High Court decisions that had consistently upheld the constitutionality of state sodomy laws.

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[21] For comprehensive accounts of the social and legal success and failures of the gay movement, *see* David E. Newton, *Gay and Lesbian Rights: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Instructional Horizons Inc., 1994); Rutledge, *The Gay Decades*; and E. Carrington Boggan, et al., *The Rights of Gay People: The Basic ACLU Guides to a Gay Person's Rights* (New York: Avon Books, 1975).

[22] Rutledge, *Gay Decades*, 143; Newton, *Gay and Lesbian Rights*, 39; and Thompson, *Long Road to Freedom*, 181. However, in "Media Reaction to the 1979 Gay March on Washington," in James W. Chesebro, ed., *Gayspeak: Gay Male & Lesbian Communication* (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1981), Jeffrey Nelson cites articles in the *New York Times, Washington Post, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune* to claim that the participants probably numbered only 25,000 to 75,000.

[23] Rutledge, *Gay Decades*, 143.

[24] "The Gay Rights Hobble," *National Review*, November 6, 1987, 16. See also, Rutledge, *Gay Decades*, 285; Newton, *Gay and Lesbian Rights*, 47; Thompson, *Long Road to Freedom*, 314.

Method

For the purpose of this study, "mainstream newspaper" is defined as any newspaper that attempts to appeal to the entire population of its community of circulation instead of one subset of that community. Specifically, I will examine the content of widely circulated large-circulation dailies in major U.S. metropolitan areas located in several different regions of the country.

Included in this study are eight daily newspapers. The *New York Times* is included because the Stonewall Inn riots took place in its coverage area. The *Washington Post* will be examined because the marches on Washington took place in its coverage area. The *San Francisco Chronicle* is included because of the reputation San Francisco had (and still has, to some extent) for being a gay "mecca," a place that large numbers of gay men and lesbians chose to call home. The rest of the newspapers in this study have been included solely because of their location, an attempt to obtain a sampling from various regions of the country -- the *Boston Globe*, the *Des Moines Register*, the *Houston Post*, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, and the *Oregonian*.

In all, then, the content of eight newspapers has been examined on twenty specific dates. The dates examined include: the day of and the nine days following the riots and arrests at the Stonewall Inn in New York (June 28 through July 7, 1969);[25] the two days preceding, the day of, and the two days following the first gay rights march on Washington (October 12 through 16, 1979); and the two days preceding, the day of, and the two days following the second gay rights march on Washington (October 10 through 14, 1987).[26]

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[25] The extended period of time after the Stonewall incident was intended to allow for lagging coverage, which may have cropped up after several days of rioting in New York's Greenwich Village perhaps indicated to newspapers that this was not to be an isolated and overlooked incident.

[26] As the marches on Washington were planned events, looking at issues two days before may reveal advance coverage of an upcoming event. Advance coverage would suggest a level of recognition not previously attained by gay men and lesbians as a movement.

Articles included in the analysis are those that deal directly with Stonewall and the two marches on Washington, as well as any activities that transpired in connection with them (such as several days of rioting in New York after the Stonewall raid, a day of lobbying on Capitol Hill after the 1979 march, or the mass wedding held on the steps of the Internal Revenue Service building in connection with the 1987 march). Such articles will be referred to below as "event" articles.

Also included for analysis are any articles published during these periods that deal -- even peripherally -- with gay men and lesbians. If gay men and lesbians were mentioned in the article, or if the article's juxtaposition to an article about, say, the 1987 march suggested it was intended to be connected to that coverage, the article was included for analysis. For instance, numerous articles about AIDS and the cost of AIDS -- both human and financial -- sprung up around coverage of the 1987 march. It is certainly possible such coverage would have been included in the newspaper that day, regardless of whether gay persons were staging an event of some sort that weekend. However, part of the demonstration in 1987 included a giant quilt bearing the names and personal effects of nearly 2,000 AIDS victims and part of what gay persons were demonstrating for that weekend was increased spending for AIDS research and care. Often, articles about AIDS that did not mention gay men and lesbians at all were framed by coverage of the march and its related activities. Such articles were included in this study as "related" articles that were intended to somehow augment or enhance coverage of the event itself.

In all, 124 articles were examined in this study. The analysis of these articles is primarily qualitative, although some quantification has been done to provide an overview of the number of articles analyzed, what portion of them were "event" articles and what portion were merely "related," and which papers ran them. Among the factors considered in the qualitative analysis were: story placement and juxtaposition; how the articles referred to gay men and lesbians (as gays, as homosexuals or as AIDS victims, for example); whose views are included in the coverage -- who was interviewed and whose perspectives are included in the coverage; whether gay men and lesbians are referred to negatively or pejoratively (most likely in quotes or in editorials); and evidence of advance coverage of planned gay liberation events, indicating a willingness to take the movement more seriously as time passes.

Findings and Discussion

It is appropriate to begin this analysis with the sort of overview possible only through quantification. Of the 124 articles found for inclusion in this analysis, sixty-eight, or about 55 percent, were "event" articles, while the rest were merely "related" articles. Table 1 shows the breakdown of articles in each of the three periods studied.

Table 1.--Types of articles, by event

	Event articles	Related articles	Total
Stonewall	3	11	14
1979 march	21	8	29
1987 march	44	37	81
Total	68	56	124

As it turns out, "related" is actually a complete misnomer for all the related articles examined in 1969. Included in the "related" category, recall, are all articles that are framed by event articles and/or refer to gay men and lesbians within their own content. The related articles in 1969 fall into one of three categories. First, shortly after the Stonewall bar raid, in what was apparently a totally unrelated incident, vigilantes chopped down about three dozen flowering trees near Flushing Meadow Park in Queens, in an area that had become "a rendezvous for homosexuals."[27] Articles concerning this event were found in both the

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[27] David Bird, "Trees in a Queens Park Cut Down as Vigilantes Harass Homosexuals," *New York Times*, 1 July 1969, 1(L).

New York Times and the *San Francisco Chronicle* and were counted as related articles, even though they bore no obvious relation to the Stonewall event itself.

Second, the *San Francisco Chronicle* -- completely coincidentally -- began a three-part series on lesbianism on June 30, 1969. The articles in this series made no reference to the Stonewall bar raid, nor did any other article printed in the *Chronicle*. The three-part series of articles was also counted among related articles for 1969, even though its content bore no apparent relationship to the Stonewall event itself.

Finally, two other related articles examined in the Stonewall period reported a U.S. Court of Appeals decision that "federal civil service employes may not be fired solely on the ground that they are homosexuals."[28] The decision was released July 1 and bore no relation to the Stonewall raid. None of the related articles in the Stonewall period mentioned the Stonewall Inn raid, nor were any of them juxtaposed to articles concerning the raid.

Also interesting from a quantifiable standpoint was the number of articles printed by each of the eight newspapers in each period. (See tables 2, 3 and 4.) Some of the results were fairly unsurprising. For instance, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran the most articles overall. These were the three largest-circulation dailies included in the study and were published in cities with a reputation for attracting large numbers of gay people.

In addition, the events in 1979 and 1987 took place in the coverage area of the *Washington Post*, and indeed, the *Post* did run the most articles concerning the march in 1987. However, this is also the source of one of the more intriguing findings of this study: the *Washington Post* was outdone by the *Houston Post* in terms of the number of articles run concerning the march in 1979. Quite unexpectedly, the *Houston Post* ran nine articles (compared to the *Washington Post*'s four and the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s five) about the march, about gay culture and even about a Houston-based gay marching band that led the parade to the Washington Monument.[29] Also somewhat surprising was the small number of articles -- three -- run in the *Boston Globe*, a number far below the number of articles published by the rest of the newspapers included in this study.

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[28] Thomas W. Lippman, "Appeals Court Overturns Dismissal Of U.S. Employe as Homosexual," *Washington Post*, 2 July 1969, p. A10(F).

Table 2.--Number of articles run by each newspaper, by event

	Boston Globe	Des Moines Register	Houston Post	Louisville Courier-J.	N.Y. Times	Oregonian	San Fran. Chronicle	Wash. Post
Stonewall	--	--	--	--	7	--	5	2
1979 march	1	3	9	2	2	3	5	4
1987 march	2	8	9	6	14	10	14	18
Total	3	11	18	8	23	13	24	24

As anticipated, the number of articles run in each paper generally increased with each gay liberation event. In addition, the number of augmenting or enhancing related stories also generally increased over time.

Table 3.--Number of event articles run by each newspaper, by event

	Boston Globe	Des Moines Register	Houston Post	Louisville Courier-J.	N.Y. Times	Oregonian	San Fran. Chronicle	Wash. Post
Stonewall	--	--	--	--	2	--	--	1
1979 march	1	1	7	2	1	3	3	3
1987 march	2	6	3	4	7	6	9	7
Total event articles	3	7	10	6	10	9	12	11

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[29] "Montrose band paces marchers," *Houston Post*, 15 October 1979, p. 1E(F).

Table 4.--Number of related articles run by each newspaper, by event

	Boston Globe	Des Moines Register	Houston Post	Louisville Courier-J.	N.Y. Times	Oregonian	San Fran. Chronicle	Wash. Post
Stonewall	--	--	--	--	5	--	5	1
1979 march	--	2	2	--	1	--	2	1
1987 march	--	2	6	2	7	4	5	11
Total related articles	--	4	8	2	13	4	12	13

Notable once again is the *Boston Globe*, which didn't run a single enhancing or augmenting article for any of the three events, not even the planned and well-publicized marches. The only paper to drop in terms of event articles was the *Houston Post*, not surprising in light of the large number of articles it ran in 1979, but perhaps somewhat surprising in light of the fact there were more events to report on in the 1987 demonstration. In 1979, organizers planned the march itself and a day of lobbying on the Hill. In 1987, organizers planned the march itself, a symbolic wedding on the steps of the IRS building, a display of the AIDS quilt and a demonstration on the steps of the Supreme Court. Then again, the difference could be explained by a single paragraph in the 1979 *Houston Post* coverage, which noted that march organizers who were from Texas told the *Houston Post* that Texans would represent "the largest number of participants from any state."[30] It also should be noted that the overall number of articles the *Houston Post* ran concerning each march (including both event and related articles) was the same -- nine.

Qualitatively, there were marked changes in the content over time. There is little to be said, first of all, about the 1969 coverage of the Stonewall Inn bar raid and subsequent riots. The most striking difference between this coverage and coverage of later gay liberation events is that there was a complete lack of coverage of Stonewall and flood of coverage that conveyed legitimacy to the movement later on. Although there are only a few articles in 1969 that deal directly with the Stonewall event, it is interesting to note that the rioting persons were not called homosexuals or gays, just "young men" or "hostile crowds." The Stonewall was referred to as a bar well known for its "homosexual clientele," but the crowd that rioted for those several nights was never referred to as gay, except in one headline in the *Washington Post*. Even then, the story itself never referred to the rioters in that way.[31]

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[30] Arthur Wiese, "Brown backs gays seeking legislation to establish rights," *Houston Post*, 13 October 1979, p. 16A(F).

The one other notable feature of the Stonewall coverage was the underplay of what *was* published about the riots. The *New York Times*, for instance, ran its first article about the incident (one of only two) on page 33, under the headline: "4 policemen hurt in 'Village' raid." The worst injury mentioned in the article was a patrolman's broken wrist.[32] The only source used for this article (as well as the other two articles concerning the Stonewall riots) was the police.

In a departure from coverage ten years before, the 1979 coverage of the first national gay rights march on Washington, D.C., went well beyond official sources and, especially after the march itself, tended to emphasize gay activists, gay liberation movement leaders and march participants as sources. A typical example were two articles that ran together in the *Houston Post* and used leaders of the Houston Gay Political Caucus and what was then the National Gay Task Force as sources. No one with an opposing viewpoint was named as a source, apart from reference to several Republican presidential candidates' stances on discrimination against gay men and lesbians.[33] A *San Francisco*

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[31] See "N.Y. Homosexuals Protest Raids," *Washington Post*, 1 July 1969, p. E2(F); "4 Policemen hurt in 'Village' raid," *New York Times*, 29 June 1969, p. 33(L); and "Hostile Crowd Dispersed Near Sheridan Square," *New York Times*, 3 July 1969, p. 19(L).

[32] "4 policemen hurt in 'Village' raid," *New York Times*, 29 June 1969, p. 33(L).

[33] Wiese, "Brown backs gays," 13 October 1979, p. 16A(F); and "4,000 Houston gays expected to attend national rights rally," *Houston Post*, 13 October 1979, p. 16A(F).

Sunday Examiner & Chronicle article used seven sources from the gay liberation movement and one ambiguous reference to "the more extreme anti-gay groups" that had reportedly "warned their members who might be in Washington to keep their children off the streets because of the 'perverts, degenerates and child molesters' who will be marching."[34] Articles in the *New York Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Washington Post* the day after the march and rally quoted extensively from banners ("Gay love is good love"), march participants' chants ("Two, four, six, eight, gay is just as good as straight") and rally speakers (such as lesbian feminist comedian Robin Tyler, who noted that when heterosexual persons showed others pictures of family, "it's called sharing," but that when gay persons show pictures of their lovers, "it's called flaunting").[35] The *Washington Post* article even quoted passersby and tourists, who said the demonstration "adds spice to the day." One of them reportedly mused, "I don't know what they hope to accomplish, but they've been very polite."[36]

Quoting so extensively from gay supporters caused coverage of the march to seem to favor gay activists. Furthermore, the coverage tended to portray the activists as rational (albeit political), in spite of pre-march coverage that quoted Washington gay leaders as expressing concern about those organizing the weekend's events, criticizing them for representing "more leftist views of gay activism rather than the mainstream homosexual community."[37] Coverage emphasized the "festive" and even "jubilant" mood of the crowd, as well as its diversity. "There were college students flying banners of their schools," noted a *San Francisco Chronicle* article the day after the march, "a group called 'Mormons for Gay Rights' and a similar Catholic group. There were professional people and blue collar workers as well as some teenagers and a number of elderly marchers."[38] The volume of articles, which included a few front-page placements, also lent further legitimacy to the reported events.

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[34] Ivan Sharpe, "Gay leaders hope Anita Bryant will rescue march," *San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle*, 14 October 1979, p. 2(F).

[35] Courtland Milloy and Loretta Tofani, "25,000 Attend Gay Rights Rally At the Monument," *Washington Post*, 15 October 1979, p. A1(F); John Fogarty, "First National Gay Rally In Washington," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 15 October 1979, p. 1(F); and Jo Thomas, "75,000 March in Capital in Drive To Support Homosexual Rights," *New York Times*, 15 October 1979, p. A14(L).

[36] Milloy and Tofani, "25,000 Attend Gay Rights Rally," 15 October 1979, p. A1(F).

[37] Thomas Morgan, "National Gay Rights march, Counter Events Set Here," *Washington Post*, 12 October 1979, p. C4(F).

If any of the 1979 coverage could be said to have been negative from the perspective of gay men and lesbians, it would have to be in connection with crowd estimates. After it was over, estimates of march and rally participants ranged from 25,000 to more than 250,000. Apparently, the U.S. Park Police had initially estimated the crowd at about 75,000, but later revised its estimate to between 25,000 and 50,000.[39] The District police estimated the crowd at 75,000, but "could not say how that figure was arrived at."[40] Crowd estimates therefore varied widely and some newspapers estimated lower than others. More interesting, perhaps, were estimates made before the march took place. The march had been at least a year in planning and organizers' estimates fell from one million to 100,000. U.S. Park Police were expecting far fewer than 100,000, and that fact was reported almost sneeringly by at least two the newspapers in this study. The *Washington Post* reported that "bickering among march leaders and indifference by some national and local groups" was expected to reduce the number of participants. The report even noted that "*based on* projections by Washington's homosexual leaders" (emphasis added) that 100,000 would attend, "local police said they expect far fewer."[41] The *Houston Post* took a slightly different approach, opting to put the march's expected attendance in a somewhat moralistic context. It noted: "Organizers of the mass march -- to be held one week after Pope John Paul II drew 175,000 to a Mass on the Mall -- estimate 100,000 people will participate, but city and park police expect no more than 25,000 demonstrators."[42]

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[38] Fogarty, "First National Gay Rally," 15 October 1979, p. 1(F). See also, Milloy and Tofani, "25,000 Attend Gay Rights Rally," *Washington Post*, 15 October 1979, p. A1(F).

[39] Thomas, "75,000 March in Capital," *New York Times*, 15 October 1979, p. A14(L).

[40] Milloy and Tofani, "25,000 Attend Gay Rights Rally," *Washington Post*, 15 October 1979, p. 1(F).

[41] Morgan, "National Gay Rights March," 12 October 1979, p. C4(F).

There was not quite this level of discrepancy in accounts of how many attended the march in 1987, however. Pre-march articles in the *Des Moines Register* and the *New York Times* said that march organizers expected more than 100,000, although the *Houston Post* reported that organizers promised the event would draw 200,000 activists.[43] When the march was over, the National Park Service Police estimated the crowd at 200,000. The eight newspapers studied here uniformly reported that figure. The *Des Moines Register* and the *Washington Post* reported the 200,000 attendance figure, but also noted march organizers had put the number around 500,000, while the *New York Times* said organizers claimed 300,000 had attended the demonstration. Aside from these minor discrepancies, reports of attendance were in complete agreement in 1987, perhaps revealing better organizing on the part of gay leaders. Another interpretation of this change, however, might be that skepticism about numbers and clout was pervasive in 1979 but relatively absent in 1987. It may be suggested that gains made by gay men and lesbians between 1979 and 1987 may have increased the believability of their large numbers and political clout.

It is interesting to note that it is not at all clear that such a development would be an inherently positive one from the perspective of lesbians and gay men. At the time of the march in 1987, a lobbyist for what was then the nation's largest conservative Christian lobbying group, Christian Voice, was sure the gains gay men and lesbians had made would only backfire on them, suggesting that "this march of 200,000 sodomites and their lobbyists may further heighten the ground swell or reaction to the position of the homosexual community." He further suggested that because AIDS was to be a "hot political issue" in the 1988 presidential campaign, creating "a direct linkage between homosexual behavior and a national health crisis" was a "dumb move" on the part of march organizers.[44]

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[42] "Parents urged to back gay children," *Houston Post*, 14 October 1979, p. 22C(F).

[43] John Hyde, "Iowa gays personally bring cause to D.C.," *Des Moines Register*, 10 October 1987, p. 3A(F); Thomas Morgan, "Amid AIDS, Gay Movement Grows but Shifts," *New York Times*, 10 October 1987, p. 39(L); "Mass wedding at gay protest: Tears, laughter, traditional rice," *Des Moines Register*, 11 October 1987, p. 2A(F); and "Gay wedding extravaganza, protest unit 100 couples," 11 October 1987, p. 8A(F).

This points up another difference in coverage between 1979 and 1987. As noted above, there was some disagreement concerning timing and approach between Washington, D.C., gay leaders and those organizing the 1979 march.[45] However, reports of such disagreement disappeared completely from news reports examined in this study once the weekend's festivities began, and the crowd was reportedly festive and upbeat, celebrating its own diversity. In 1987, however, division among gay and lesbian marchers was reported throughout the five-day period. Using demands for increased funding for AIDS care and research as the focal point for the march was perhaps the biggest source of disagreement among those in the gay and lesbian community at least according to news accounts. An entire article in the *New York Times* on October 10, 1987, was devoted to discussion of that disagreement and what it might mean to the movement. One conservative gay man, a former U.S. Congressman, accused the leadership of the gay movement of being out of step with most gay men and lesbians. "Throw in AIDS," he said, "and a gay political endorsement is a kiss of death." On the other hand, gay leaders remarked that the anger and resentment caused by the federal government's lack of attention to funding for AIDS research and care was an effective fuel for the movement, that it had "prompted a dramatic mobilization and spurred fund-raising and lobbying."[46]

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[44] Jerry Roberts, "Gay Rights March Could 'Backfire,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, 13 October 1987, p. A9(F).

[45] Morgan, "National Gay Rights march," *Washington Post*, 12 October 1979, p. C4(F).

[46] Morgan, "Amid AIDS, Gay Movement Grows but Shifts," 10 October 1987, p. 1(L).

But more than this. AIDS was an issue that more than just gay men and lesbians could rally around. Celebrities like comedian Whoopi Goldberg and politician Jesse Jackson spoke to the crowd in support of AIDS victims and in support of what Goldberg, who said at the time she had lost 60 friends to AIDS, called "human rights," emphasizing it had "nothing to do with being gay or straight."[47] In fact, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that Goldberg was one of several heterosexual speakers who delivered their entire speeches "without uttering the word 'gay.'"[48]

In spite of organizers' efforts to reach out to a broader civil and human rights community, there was a slightly more radical tone to reports run in 1987 compared to those run in 1979. Coverage in 1979 emphasized family, festivity and the positive aspects of participants' diversity. While not by any means overrun by images and descriptions of the more radical fringe of the gay and lesbian movement, the 1987 coverage did not ignore it (as, *perhaps*, the 1979 coverage may have). For instance, in reporting about a minor skirmish that occurred between supporters of then-U.S. Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork and gay activists, the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that one of the gay men involved was wearing "a black jacket with an obscenity stenciled on the back," and that two male onlookers were wearing "brown-and-green military camouflage" skirts and called themselves members of "a 'neo-paganist-type group' called Radical Fairies."[49] There was also mention, in at least two articles, of "leather-clad" demonstrators.[50] While none of this may be shocking to someone within the gay community, much of it may have been offensive (or at least obnoxious) to many "mainstream" heterosexuals.

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[47] Karlyn Barker and Linda Wheeler, "Gay activists rally in D.C. against bias," *Des Moines Register*, 12 October 1987, p. 1A(F).

[48] Randy Shilts, "Reagan Policy On AIDS Protested," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 12 October 1987, p. A1(F).

[49] Carl T. Hall, "Bork Fans Clash with Gays," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 October 1987, p. A9(F).

[50] "Gay wedding extravaganza," *Houston Post*, 11 October 1987, p. 8A(F); and Karlyn Barker and Linda Wheeler, "Hundreds of Thousands March for Gay Rights," *Washington Post*, 12 October 1987, p. A1(F).

Even so, as in 1979, sources for event articles in 1987 were overwhelmingly drawn from the gay and lesbian community itself, or from supporters of that community. Quotes from demonstrators seemed overall to be a little more strident in 1987 than they were in 1979, perhaps reflecting the changing mood within the gay movement itself, as more and more people came out, or were forced out, of the closet. As quoted in the *Boston Globe*'s report of the march and rally, Pat Norman, co-chairman of the 1987 march, summed up the tone of the weekend's events, at least as rendered by the eight newspapers studied here: "Civil disobedience is not new to gays and lesbians. Every day in our lives we commit the act of civil disobedience by loving another."[51]

Two other points should be made about how 1987 coverage was different from coverage in 1979. First, not only did the amount of coverage increase, but the 1987 coverage involved a far greater number of front-page articles -- 12 in 1987, compared to 3 in 1979 -- as well as more in-depth, touching pieces, many of which fell into the "related articles" category of this study. Most of these 1987 articles were stories about the need for education about AIDS, victims of AIDS and the reality of how AIDS affects the lives of all Americans, straight and gay.[52] Others dealt with issues surrounding the lack of legal acknowledgment of gay and lesbian long-term relationships.[53]

And finally, the language used to refer to gay men and lesbians shifted slightly between 1979 and 1987. In 1979, every paper and news service except the *Oregonian* and

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[51] Douglas Jehl, "Gays besiege Supreme Court," *Boston Globe*, 14 October 1987, p. 3(FM).

[52] See, for example, Eugene L. Meyer and Eve Zibart, "AIDS Fear Closed Restaurant, Owners Say," *Houston Post*, 10 October 1987, p. 6B(F); Heather Reed, "Iowans need information about AIDS -- educator," *Des Moines Register*, 11 October 1987, p. 1B(F); Richard M. Restak, "Doctors caught in ethical dilemma when it comes to AIDS tests," *Oregonian*, 11 October 1987, p. B5(F); and Leslie Scanlon, "So much work, so little time: Lack of money suppresses information about AIDS," *Louisville Courier-Journal*, 12 October 1987, p. A1(F).

[53] See, for example, Linda Wheeler, "2,000 Gay Couples Exchange Vows in Ceremony of Rights," *Washington Post*, 11 October 1987, p. B1(F) and Candy J. Cooper, "Lesbians, gays 'wed' en masse," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 October 1987, p. A1(F).

(inconsistently) the *San Francisco Chronicle* used "homosexuals" as a noun to refer to the demonstrators, and used "gay" only as a modifier for "rights" or "activists" (in addition to using it as a noun in statements made by march participants). By 1987, the *Des Moines Register*, the *New York Times* and the *San Francisco Chronicle* had begun consistently to refer to the marchers as "gay and lesbian" or "gays and lesbians," adopting the demonstrators' own terms for themselves and perhaps showing signs of a gradually increasing societal acceptance of gay men and lesbians.

Conclusions

There would appear to be some evidence of newspaper coverage mirroring social acceptance of gay men and lesbians, and perhaps vice versa. As the gay liberation movement grew and won more battles -- both moral and legislative -- coverage of their efforts also seemed to grow, with increasing numbers of articles and more in-depth stories. There is also possible evidence of a slight backlash from that growth; marchers in 1979 having been featured as festive and jubilant, while 1987 marchers were occasionally depicted as militant or radical, and marchers in 1979 were portrayed as unified by the time of the rally, while disagreements between 1987 marchers were still being emphasized well into the weekend's events.

However, it appears that newspapers also show signs of assisting the acceptance of gay men and lesbians. Greater numbers of stories lends legitimacy to the movement, and greater depth of coverage helps foster a new understanding of the movement and the people involved. In addition, changing the terms by which we know activists in the movement (from "homosexuals" to "gay men and lesbians") tends to legitimize and make "normal" those who use those terms to refer to themselves.

Event-centered research such as this study is limited in its ability to assess every-day treatment of gay and lesbian issues (or even whether any day-to-day treatment exists when planned events are not taking place). It sacrifices a bit of perspective in exchange for a greater volume of data. Further research in this area might attempt to regain a little of that perspective by examining newspapers (or other media) during longer time frames and focusing on coverage in one specific region, state or city. Accompanied by an analysis of local developments in lesbian and gay rights or public acceptance, such a study might be able to find a more definitive nexus between social acceptance of gay men and lesbians and media treatment of them.

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Unhappy Events in Ireland

Irish-American Press Coverage of Dublin's 1916 Easter Rising

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ABSTRACT
UNHAPPY EVENTS IN IRELAND:
IRISH-AMERICAN PRESS COVERAGE OF DUBLIN'S 1916 EASTER RISING

Three Irish-American newspapers were examined for their coverage of Dublin's 1916 Easter Rising and the subsequent execution of the Rising's leaders. The papers examined were: *Kentucky Irish American*, published in Louisville, Kentucky; *The Catholic Standard and Times,* published in Philadelphia; and *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator,* published in New York City. Coverage of the Rising in these papers was also contrasted to that found in three non-immigrant newspapers: the Boston *Globe*; the New York *Times*; and the Chicago *Tribune*. Each newspaper was examined in regards to extensiveness of coverage, depth of coverage, and assignment of blame.

By examining Irish-American newspaper coverage of such a controversial event in Irish history, this study attempts to discover how Irish-Americans interpreted events in Ireland and how their interpretation differed from non-immigrant Americans. The Irish-American press has rarely been examined as a means for learning more about the immigrant experience. What was important to Irish immigrants, how they interpreted current events in Ireland and America, and how they defined their role in their new home can be gleaned from what the Irish-American press considered newsworthy and how they presented it to their readers.

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At noon on Monday, April 26, 1916, Padraic Pearse, Provisional President of the Irish Republic, stood on the steps of Dublin's post office building and began reading a proclamation from *Poblacht na h-Éireann*, the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic, to the people of Ireland:

> IRISHMEN AND IRISHWOMEN: In the name of God and of the dead generations from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us, summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom.
>
> Having organised and trained her manhood through her secret revolutionary organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and through her open military organisations, the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, having patiently perfected her discipline, having resolutely waited for the right moment to reveal itself, she now seizes that moment and supported by her exiled children in America and by gallant allies in Europe, but relying in the first on her own strength, she strikes in full confidence of victory. . . .[1]

Dublin's Easter Rising of 1916 had begun. Having resigned themselves to the "necessity and inevitablilty" of an armed rebellion, a small collection of private military groups--the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Irish Volunteers, and the Irish Citizen Army--joined forces and for six days fought for freedom from English rule. Simply put, the master plan for the Easter Rising was, beginning at noon on Monday, to seize, fortify and occupy as long as possible a number of strategic parts of the city.[2]

In the Irish language the root *éirí*, is common to both the Irish word for 'political rebellion'--*éirí amach*--and the Irish word for 'resurrection of the dead'--*aiséiri*. The Easter Rising was indeed both a political rebellion and a resurrection of Ireland's commitment to gaining independence from England. Prior to--and even during--the Rising, public opinion among Irish, Irish-Americans, and non-immigrant

Americans was squarely against revolutionary force as a means of breaking free from English rule. But in the days following the Rising, British authorities established martial law and promptly began court-martials and executions of the rebel leaders. As news spread of the executions and of the harsh treatment of Irish civilians who were not involved in the Rising, support for England wavered. Public opinion in Ireland quickly swung in favor of the rebels and whatever means were necessary to facilitate independence.

How did Irish-American newspapers handle news of the Easter Rising? Did the Rising receive extensive coverage in the Irish-American press? Were the rebels supported by the Irish-American press? Or was the Rising viewed as just the latest in a long line of failed revolutions? Did the Irish-American press' coverage of the Rising parallel that of non-immigrant American papers, such as the *New York Times* and Chicago *Tribune*?

Irish immigrants left a homeland filled with strife and violence, one where they enjoyed only second-class status; they came to a country that viewed them with suspicion and an attitude of superiority, one that offered them continued poverty and hardship.[3] How did these people respond to their condition? Did they still feel bound to Ireland by their memories and by their friends and family who remained there? Or did they try to turn their backs to the past and get on with life in America?

This study of how the Irish-American press handled the Easter Rising will begin to answer these questions. Irish independence was a complicated and emotional issue for Irish-born citizens, and careful study of how it was reported to an Irish-American audience by Irish-American journalists will indicate how Irish-Americans felt about their homeland, their heritage, and themselves.

Larger questions that this study may also help answer are those concerning the role of the press in early immigrant life. How important was the immigrant press to America's immigrant population in the twentieth century? Did the immigrant press strive to help newcomers learn about and adapt to their new country? Did it encourage immigrants to embrace an American way of life? Or did it encourage immigrants to maintain ties with the culture and country they left behind?

The Irish-American press consisted of two distinct types of newspapers: nationalist papers, which addressed political, economic, social and cultural issues facing the Irish as a national group in

America; and Catholic papers, whose primary focus was religious issues and the Irish as Catholics.[4] A thorough study of the Irish-American press, therefore, must also include the Catholic press.

Neither branch of the Irish-American press has received much scholarly attention. The small amount of scholarship that does exist often focuses on a descriptive history of individual newspapers. Consequently, much of the information that is available about the Irish-American press deals with the basic details of a few newspapers: Where and when the paper was established; who founded it; what historic events were covered by the paper; and what caused its demise. Clyde F. Crews's *Mike Barry and the Kentucky Irish America,* an anthology of editorials, offers readers precisely this type of information, tracing the paper's history from its introduction on 4 July 1898 through its final issue on 30 November 1968.

Pioneer Catholic Journalism, published by The United States Catholic Historical Society, follows this formula in its efforts to trace "the origin, scope, progress, and design of newspapers and magazines from the earliest times down to the year 1840 inclusive."[5] The title *Pioneer Catholic Journalism* is somewhat misleading in that the author considers Irish nationalist journalism to be "the forerunner of the real Catholic newspaper" and though "not distinctively Catholic in purpose . . . so sympathetic in tone towards those of the ancient Faith that it deserves a place in any treatment of Catholic journalism."[6] It, therefore, includes not only a brief look at the roots of Irish national journalism in the United States, but also profiles of several prominant Irish-American newspapers.

Books dealing with Irish immigrant populations in American cities seldom devote more than a few pages to the Irish-American press. Historian Oscar Handlin notes in *Boston's Immigrants: A Study in Acculturation* that the newspaper was one of several tools used by Boston's various ethnic groups to preserve their cultural heritage. Among Boston's ethinic communities, Handlin writes, "the strongest organs naturally developed among the Irish, who turned to them for news of home, for accounts of their own activities and organizations, and above all, for sympathetic advice, derived from their own ideas, on the strange issues they faced as residents and citizens of a new world."[7] Unfortunately, Handlin spends most of his discussion of the Irish-American press in descriptive rather than analytical terms. Why the Irish had the strongest press and how they used it to preserve their cultural heritage is not discussed.

The Irish in Philadelphia offers a simiarly cursory treatment of the Irish-American press. In addition to providing a one and one-half page description of the news typically carried in Irish-American newspapers, historian Dennis Clark does touch on the significance of Philadelphia's lack of a long-lived nationalist paper independent of clerical control. Unlike Irish-Americans in New York, those in Philadelphia relied heavily on Catholic papers for news of Ireland.[8] This, according to Clark, "suggests that they were somewhat more closely attuned to clerical opinion than their more diverse and politically active compatriots in New York."[9] The Catholic press in Philadelphia extensively covered current events in Ireland, illustrating the church's attention to both the spiritual well-being and the ethnic concerns of Irish immigrants living in the city.[10]

Clark looks much closer at the Irish-American press in *Erin's Heirs: Irish Bonds of Community*. A serious problem for Irish immigrants, according to Clark, was that "[t]heir sense of community, strong in Ireland, had to be reestablished in the American setting, and that meant they had to adapt and extend their old traditions of oratory, verbal enjoyment, and political discourse and use the new inventions of newspapers, radio, and other media to penetrate a new environment. The result was a distinctive adventure in cultural exploration for this ethnic group."[11] While the Irish could stay abreast of American current events through the general press, they needed their own press to help them share and shape their group heritage. The Irish-American press "helped develop a coherent rhetoric of immigrant life, giving expression to nationalist and ethnic goals."[12]

Clark notes that Irish-American journalism was typically "a journalism of controversies," with newspapers sometimes engaging in controversial exchanges with powerful local leaders.[13] In fact, he defines the role of the Irish-American press as not only to spread information, but to provoke controversy as well.[14]

Eileen McMahon provides a more in-depth look at the history of the Irish-American press and its role in the Irish-American community in her chapter in Sally Miller's *The Ethnic Press in the United States: A Historical Analysis and Handbook*. Both the Catholic and the nationalist press attempted to help Irish immigrants adapt to life in America. The early Catholic press, explains McMahon, "cultivated the Irishness of its readers" and "encouraged Irish-Americans to form their own societies to foster Irish and Catholic identities,"[15] while the nationalist press both encouraged its readers to assimilate quickly into American society, but to also remember their responsibilities to Ireland.[16]

The nationalist press became a powerful force in the Irish-American community after the failed Young Ireland revolt of 1848. Many "talented and articulate nationalists"[17] fled to America and established newspapers to provide a forum for their views. McMahon attributes the success and vitality of the Irish-American press to the talent and strong character of Irish-American editors, who "had a tremendous influence on shaping Irish nationalist opinion and helping the Irish transform themselves from foreigners and immigrants to American citizens."[18]

Without question, there is much more to be learned about the Irish-American press. Most attention has been given to the Irish-American press of the nineteenth century, but descriptive histories dominate the research focused on this time period. The press of the twentieth century has been ignored almost completely. Although the twentieth century did see the demise of a significant Irish-American press, it wasn't until the 1920s that Irish-Americans found themselves in a position where they no longer needed to preserve their "ethnic pride and solidarity."[19]

The Irish-American press has rarely been examined as a means for learning more about the immigrant experience. What was important to Irish immigrants, how they interpreted current events in Ireland and America, and how they defined their role in their new home can be gleaned from what the Irish-American press considered newsworthy and how they presented it to their readers.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Questions concerning the Irish immigrant experience are best answered by examining the Irish-American press based on what cultural historian James W. Carey calls a "ritual view of communication." Carey identifies two distinct points of view in the study of communication: the transmission view and the ritual view. According to Carey, the transmission view is the more common in American communication scholarship, and in the work of other industrial societies.[20] It is defined by terms such as "imparting," "sending," "transmitting," or "giving information to others."[21] Communication is understood to be the dissemination of news and knowledge over geographical distance in an effort to control an audience.[22]

Scholars taking a transmission view of communication concentrate their efforts on examining how messages are sent and received, and what impact messages have on receivers. Research stemming from a transmission view, commonly known as the "effects tradition," sees the media as the means by which information is distributed and researchers typically ask questions such as: Does news obscure or shed light on reality? How do messages affect the attitudes and opinions of the receiver? How do receivers use the information contained in the message?[23]

Carey believes that the preponderance of communication research based on the transmission view has caused the field to become stale and stagnant.[24] To infuse new life into communication studies, he advocates basing research on the ritual view--in other words, a cultural studies perspective of communication.

The ritual view is less common in American communications studies, yet it is the older of the two views.[25] It is defined by terms such as "sharing," "participation," "association," "fellowship," and "the possession of common faith."[26] Although scholars taking a ritual view do not deny that communication is a process of spreading information, they are more concerned with communication as a process of shaping and sharing culture. (Culture in this case not only means the nationalistic or religious characteristics of a particular group. More importantly, it also means "the site where meaning is generated and experienced," and where "social realities are constructed, experienced and interpreted."[27])

The media, when examined from the ritual view, are more than merely vehicles for transmitting information--they are cultural artifacts. As communication historian John J. Pauly points out, the media have "documented the making and unmaking of modern societies. [They have] told of all the strategies by which societies identify themselves, offer models of reality, set the bounds of normal behavior, dramatize conflicts between competing groups, legitimize power, and chart the future."[28] Cultural studies scholars, therefore, ask questions concerning how reality is constructed and how the media operate within society: For example, how do media function as mechanisms to give order to meaning? How are media texts structured? How are media texts interpreted by their audience?

Several important assumptions underlie the ritual view. Cultural studies scholars, for example, assume that reality is created rather than discovered. Furthermore, not one but *many* realities are created. As Carey explains, culture "is never singular and univocal. It is, like nature itself, multiple, various, and varietal. It is this for each of us. Therefore, we must begin . . . from the assumption of multiple realities.[29] It is also assumed that human beings create and use symbols in daily life. Pauly writes that, "Humans literally make sense using symbols, and are subsequently made over by their symbols, so that language provides a very model of how our humanness operates in the world."[30] A related assumption inherent in cultural studies is that the production and use of symbols is a public occurrence. Symbolic activity can be uncovered in a variety of social institutions, such as the arts, religion, science, and journalism. The media provide society with an excellent site for public symbolizing; they are "modernity's center stage, the place where groups contend over the meaning of persons, places, events, and policies."[31] Finally, cultural studies scholars assume that the media are inscribed with ideology.

Consequently, to researchers taking the ritual view, there is more to a newspaper article than meets the eye. In addition to spreading the news (which Carey says never really changes[32]) a news story serves as a text that can be examined and interpreted for clues about how society defines reality, how it "gives life an overall form, order, and tone."[33] Journalism is, in Pauly's words, "a form of cultural midwifery through which society is born and nurtures itself."[34] Each article tells the story of a particular event or person, but it also tells of the on-going process of reality construction and the struggle for cultural authority.[35]

Much of what had been familiar to the Irish in their homeland was in a state of distress--their language, their religion, and their rural lifestyle had all been affected by famine, fighting, and the flight of many Irish to America. According to historian Dennis Clark,

> In America a refuge could be found, and a transitional culture formed that was an asylum for several generations until the damages of affliction and disruption could be

> repaired. By partly fusing with the dominant American culture and partly retaining that which was Irish, the emigrants both pursued their new dispensation and kept a sustaining identity. It was this transitional medium that was Irish-America.[36]

The Irish-American press was important to Irish-Americans not just as a source of news, but as an arena where they could develop and maintain their cultural identity. By 1910, 97 percent of Irish immigrants entering America could read and write English[37], so they could stay abreast of most current events by reading mainstream newspapers that were published daily. Furthermore, Irish-American newspapers were weeklies and could not compete with the timeliness of mainstream newspapers.

The editors at *Kentucky Irish American* obviously assumed that their audience followed current events in other newspapers. Their first report of the fighting in Ireland began, "All Ireland was placed under martial law Thursday afternoon, when the uprising at Dublin was still acute. . ."[38] No attempt was made in this article to explain *what* uprising at Dublin was still acute, indicating that readers were expected to haved learned about it from other sources.

But by discussing events in Ireland and in other Irish-American communities, the Irish-American press helped maintain a sense of connectedness among Irish immigrants. Through its coverage of events in America outside the Irish-American community, the press helped immigrants make sense of their new country. And within all the stories published in Irish-American newspapers were the cultural tools by which Irish immigrants affirmed both their Irish and American identities.

The Irish in America

In 1916 America was espousing neutrality towards the great war being fought in Europe. Nevertheless, America--both her citizens and her government--was strongly pro-Ally and, more specifically, pro-British. According to historian Charles Callan Tansill, "[i]n America, for more than a century, British propaganda had been extremely effective. In 1916 there were few Americans who doubted any story that had a London postmark."[39] President Woodrow Wilson in particular had a strong leaning towards Britain and the Allies. Historian Francis M. Carroll wrote that, "Since the outbreak of the war there had been a growing feeling, at least among the Irish-American leaders, that

Wilson's neutrality policies were definitely pro-British."[40] Wilson's position on England became even more evident when he refused to comment publicly about the Rising and the executions that followed.

Early twentieth-century Americans were secure in their belief that Anglo-Saxon peoples were superior to all other ethnic groups. Theorists of the day, explains Carroll, published works that concluded that English-speaking races

> . . . were the most highly developed racial or ethnic group in the world. With evidence of the far-flung British Empire, the smooth-running British social and political system and the technical and industrial accomplishments of Britain, Anglo-Saxon superiority was virtually self-evident. Throughout the world the Anglo-Saxons were the most capable, the most technologically competent, the most powerful, the most wealthy and the most enlightened. Paradoxically also, the Anglo-Saxons were the most democratic and the most fit to govern others.[41]

Irish-Americans' belief systems and behavior seemed to further prove to non-immigrant Americans that Anglo-Saxons were superior. The majority of Irish immigrants were Catholic, and they were viewed with suspicion by non-immigrant Americans, many of whom considered America a Protestant country and Catholicism "an anti-christian conspiracy which threatened political, religious, intellectual and educational freedom."[42] The very fact that Ireland had been fighting for so long--and continued to fight--against Anglo-Saxon rule only emphasized her inferiority for many non-immigrant Americans. Further, many Irish-Americans rallied to prevent American involvement in World War I because they believed that England's defeat would prepare the way for Irish independence. This lack of support for the Allies "demonstrated for all who had eyes to see the extent to which [the Irish] were incapable of good judgment. . ."[43]

As is often the case, generalizations and stereotypes about Irish immigrants were only somewhat accurate. The majority of Irish-born Americans were, in fact Catholic--until the twentieth century, nearly 90 percent of Irish immigrants to America were Catholic.[44] Although Irish immigrants of the nineteenth century were extremely poor (their occupational mobility during the late nineteenth century was about equal to that of American blacks[45]), according to historian Patrick Blessing, "[b]y 1920 the evidence of Irish success was mixed, but in general modest. Many children of immigrants had moved up on the occupational scale and into the developing suburbs."[46]

Journalism was familiar to Irish immigrants and in Ireland it was often associated with political agitation. Irish citizens learned about cultural and political nationalism through Irish newspapers published by special interest groups such as Young Ireland and the Fenians. Dennis Clark notes that, "the Irish reading audience was politicized early. Grievances and dissenting views repressed in Ireland were expressible in America."[47]

Ireland Before the 1916 Easter Rising

English settlers arrived in Ireland to colonize the country in the twelfth century. Over the years English authorities sought to dominate Irish natives through laws that severely limited their rights to own property, practice their religion (Catholicism), speak their mother tongue (*Gaeilge*), and even to dress or wear their hair in an Irish fashion. Not surprisingly, the Irish fought against such treatment. Riots, risings, and rebellions pepper Irish history, but none succeeded in freeing Ireland from England's grip.

In 1798 a failed rebellion led by Irishmen seeking Catholic emancipation, political reform, and independence from England did make British Prime Minister William Pitt realize that Ireland needed to be dealt with. His solution to the problems in Ireland was a union with England. According to Dr. R.B. McDowell, Trinity College Fellow emeritus, Pitt believed that such a union would

> . . . ensure coordinated activity in an emergency, encourage British capitalists to invest in Ireland, thus raising Irish living standards, and by transforming the position of Irish protestants from that of a minority in Ireland into a majority in the United Kingdom, remove their fears of catholic emancipation.[48]

Unfortunately, The Act of Union, passed in 1801, did not quiet the turmoil in Ireland.

During the 1800s political strife in Ireland centered on two issues: land ownership and national independence. Most Irish peasants lived and farmed on land owned by English landlords. Rent was often outrageously high and tenants lived under a constant threat of eviction. A land act passed in 1881 marked the beginning of the end of the land ownership issues, and, by the first decade of the twentieth century, Irish lands were owned primarily by the Irish who farmed them.[49]

National independence proved to be a more difficult issue. In 1870 a home rule movement began to pursue freedom through constitutional means. Home rule promised a continued union with England and establishment of an Irish Parliament that would govern domestic affairs. The majority of the Irish people supported home rule, but separatist groups such as Sinn Féin[49] and the Irish Republican Brotherhood vehemently opposed anything less than complete independence.

Home rule bills were proposed but did not pass in 1886 and 1893; the home rule bill of 1912 succeeded in the House of Commons, but the House of Lords had the power to delay the bill's coming into law until 1914. In June 1913 Padraic Pearse wrote, "This generation of Irishmen will be called upon in the near future to make a very passionate assertion of nationality. The form in which that assertion shall be made must depend upon many things, more especially upon the passage or non-passage of the present Home Rule Bill."[50] In 1914, England went to war and the bill was put on hold indefinitely.[51]

Dubin's Easter Rising of 1916

When England went to war, Pearse and his colleagues in the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood decided that, before the war's end, there must be an Irish rebellion against British rule. As long as England was preoccupied with the war effort, they reasoned, she would be more vulnerable to Irish freedom fighters.[52]

Sir Roger Casement, an Irishman who had been knighted for his work for the Crown in Africa and South America, became involved in the secret plans to stage a rebellion. To Casement and others, an enemy of England was an ally to Ireland, so the rebels turned to Germany for ammunition and military back-up. When a series of mishaps ensured that the expected arms would not arrive in Ireland, Casement returned to Ireland to stop, or at least postpone, the Rising. Before he could accomplish his mission, however, Casement was captured by the British. British authorities assumed he had arrived to lead a rebellion and that his capture ended the threat of civil unrest.

On April 24, however, the Rising began as planned. In the six days of fighting, hundreds of people died and nearly two hundred Dublin buildings sustained damages totaling over eight million dollars. After the rebels unconditionally surrendered on April 29, British authorities immediate went to work court-martialling and executing the rebel leaders. Both Irish and American citizens were shocked by the swift and deadly punishment Britain handed the rebels. According to the May 7 issue of the *Washington Post*, "It is no exaggeration to say that a shock went around the civilized world when it was learned that Patrick [sic] H. Pearse and the other leaders of the Irish revolt had been tried by drumhead court-martial, found guilty and sentenced in a trice and shot at sunrise against a wall of Dublin castle."[53]

The deaths of four men in particular enraged Irish and Americans alike. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, editor of the Dublin paper, *The Irish Citizen*, was shot without the benefit of a trial. He had no part in the Rising and was recruiting volunteers for a civilian group that was to prevent looting of the city when he was arrested. Willie Pearse, Padraic Pearse's younger brother, was neither a leader nor a 'known organizer' of the rebellion. His loyalty to his brother brought him to the General Post Office, where the rebels had set up their headquarters, yet he was executed one day after Padraic. Joseph Plunkett, one of the signers of the Proclamation, had undergone surgery for glandular tuberculosis just a short time before the rebellion began. By the time of his arrest he was "an enfeebled invalid" who "by sheer strength of will . . . was able to totter about" the post office.[54] Nevertheless, he was tried and executed along with the other rebel leaders. Finally, James Connolly, Commandant-General of the rebel forces, had been seriously wounded during the fighting. By the time he was court-martialled, he was too weak to sit up in bed. On May 12 he was taken by ambulance to Kilmainham Jail, carried by stretcher to the jail yard, set in a chair since he was too weak to stand, and shot by a firing squad.[55]

Method

For purposes of this study, 'Irish-American press' is defined as newspapers that were edited and published by Irish-born Americans and their descendents for an audience of Irish-born Americans and children of Irish immigrants. 'Non-immigrant press' is defined as those newspapers that understood their audience to be simply American, and did not attempt to identify with any of the subcultures within

American society. Ideally, the study would focus on newspapers published in and around cities which boasted the largest number of Irish-born citizens in 1916. These cities were New York City (252, 672 in 1910); Philadelphia (83,196); Boston (66,014); and Chicago (65,969).[56] Newspapers from Chicago and Boston were not available when this study was conducted, however, so the following newspapers were examined: *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*--published in New York City; *The Catholic Standard and Times*--published in Philadelphia; and *Kentucky Irish American*--published in Louisville, Kentucky. (There was a small population [5,913] of Irish-born citizens living in Kentucky in 1910.[57])

Issues for study were selected according to key events in the rebellion. The Rising began on Monday, April 24, 1916, and ended on Saturday, April 29, 1916, with the unconditional surrender of the rebel forces. On May 3, Padraic Pearse, Thomas J. Clarke, and Thomas MacDonagh--all signers of the Proclamation of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic--were put to death for leading the rebellion. Although over one hundred men and women were sentenced to death for actively participating in the Rising, British authorities conducted the fifteenth--and final--execution on May 12. These newspapers were published once a week and the issues chosen were Saturday, April 29, May 6, and May 13.

The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator, established in 1870[58], was considered the most influential Irish-American newspaper in the country.[59] This 12-page weekly was read nationally but circulation figures are not available. Founder Patrick Ford "argued that not only did Ireland need to be liberated from British imperialism but the Irish in Ireland had to be emancipated from manorial capitalism and the Irish in the United States from industrial capitalism."[60] At the time of the Easter Rising, the paper was published by the Estate of Patrick Ford.

The Catholic Standard and Times was established in 1866[61] as the official organ of the Philadelphia Archdiocese. In 1916 the paper's circulation was estimated at 21, 578.[62] This weekly was eight to ten pages long and was published by The Catholic Standard and Times Publishing Company. Although officially a church publication, it was, notes Dennis Clark, "highly partisan to Irish interests and . . . was often almost completely dominated by material on Irish affairs."[63]

The four-page *Kentucky Irish American* was "Devoted to the Social and Moral Advancement of Irish Americans and Catholics."[65] Established on the Fourth of July 1898[66] and published weekly by the Kentucky Irish American Printing Company, the paper's circulation was estimated at 5,200.[67] Founder William M. Higgins intentionally chose July 4 as the paper's first day of operation to symbolize the paper's pride in being both Irish and American.[68]

Three non-immigrant newspapers were also examined for their coverage of the Rising: the New York *Times*, Boston *Globe*, and Chicago *Tribune*. Issues for study were also selected based on the key events surrounding the Rising. These newspapers were published daily and the issues chosen were April 26, May 4, and May 12.

The New York *Times* was established in 1851 and by 1916 had amassed a readership of 318,274[69]. Elmer Davis, a member of the editorial staff described the newspaper as ". . .a sober, conservative, dignified paper, always American, with its special position in the esteem of readers who valued sobriety of discussion and intelligent and balanced judgment."[70] By 1921 the *Times'* editors still hadn't forgotten that some Irish-Americans opposed America's involvement in World War I. According to Davis, ". . .a great many critics of the *Times* are persons whose friendship the paper would be ashamed. It is sufficient to cite in this connection the bitter attacks made upon it during the war by German agents or their Irish sympathizers."[71]

The Boston *Globe* was established in 1872 as a politically independent newspaper[72]. It was the only non-immigrant paper in Boston to champion the city's Irish-born citizens in the 1880s.[73] By 1916 it's circulation was 228,460.[74]

Chicago's oldest newspaper, the Chicago *Tribune*, was established in 1847[75]. Politically, it was Independent Republican[76]. In 1882 the paper's editors predicted that, ". . .the crimes of England in India, South and North Africa, Afghanistan, and Ireland must someday pay a fearful reckoning."[77] In 1916 the *Tribune's* circulation totaled 354,520.[78]

Each Irish-American and non-immigrant newspaper was examined in regards to extensiveness of coverage, depth of coverage, and assignment of blame. Press coverage was defined as both news stories and editorials.

Findings

Extensiveness of Coverage

When news of the Rising reached America's non-immigrant press, it was front-page material. The New York *Times*, Boston *Globe* and Chicago *Tribune* each ran page-one stories with large, prominant headlines proclaiming a "Serious Revolt Rises in Dublin,"[78] "Dublin Rebels Beseiged,"[79] and "Troops Crush Revolt in Dublin; Take Post Office Seized by Rioters, Many Killed in Street Fighting."[80] Furthermore, the Chicago *Tribune* included a page-two article that focused on reactions to the Rising among Chicago's Irish.

Early news of the Rising didn't gain as much attention within the Irish-American press. Only *The Irish World* devoted front-page space to the upheaval in Dublin on April 29. The story headline, "Ireland Is In Arms," took up five of the front page's seven columns. The story contained scant information about the Rising because telegraphic communications with Dublin was cut off by the rebels and what information did get out was censored by the British. It also included brief notes about other indications of unrest in Ireland, such as the attempted wrecking of a police train 50 miles outside of Dublin, and the recent suppression of Irish newspapers by British authorities. In addition to the front page piece, *The Irish World* also ran an editorial about the fighting in Dublin--"Stirring News From Ireland."

The *Catholic Standard and Times* also ran an editorial--its only piece concerning the Rising on April 29--but characterized the fighting as "[u]nhappy events in Ireland,"[81] where blood was "deplorably shed."[82] The author also noted "the bereavement of many homes after obstinate fighting in several portions of the city."[83]

Kentucky Irish American noted the Rising on April 29 in one short article on page two entitled, "Irish Situation Grave." As noted earlier, however, this paper's editors clearly assumed their readers were also following the events in Ireland through other news sources. The article's brevity was also a result of press censorship in Ireland, explained the article's writer, which made it impossible to get detailed information.[84]

By May 6, however, the Rising had become newsworthy to the Irish-American press. *Kentucky Irish American* devoted front-page coverage to the Rising for weeks following the execution of the rebel leaders. *The Catholic Standard and Times*, although never placing news of the Rising on the front page, also continued coverage of the Rising and its aftermath for weeks. *The Irish World* expanded its coverage to the point that oftentimes five or more pages were devoted exclusively to stories relating to the Rising.

Given the differences in coverage, it appears that the Rising was initially an event of greater significance to the non-immigrant press than the Irish-American press. Although America had not yet entered World War I, she was strongly pro-British and interested in Britain's war effort. Consequently, violent upheaval within the British Empire--which could impact Britain's ability to fight effectively in the war--was of great interest to Americans, especially non-immigrant Americans, who considered themselves Anglo-Saxon.

The Irish-American press had a different perspective. Irish history included a number of unsuccessful attempts to gain freedom from British rule and the Easter Rising was not expected to be any different. Both the brevity and the tone of the articles in *Kentucky Irish American* and *The Catholic Standard and Times* indicated an expectation of failure; and another failed rebellion simply wasn't newsworthy. *The Irish World*, however, did consider the Rising newsworthy and good news, as well. There was clearly a difference of opinion among Irish-Americans concerning the use of revolutionary force in their homeland, whether it was an appropriate means for gaining independence, as well as whether it was likely to be effective.

The aftermath of the Rising was of great significance to Irish-America. After putting down the rebellion, England assumed the familiar role of oppressor and not only the rebels, but also innocent Irish citizens were punished by British military forces. Feelings of outrage aimed at a common enemy united the Irish-American community. The fallen rebel leaders became martyrs for Irish freedom and the rebellion itself was transformed in the minds of Irish-Americans from a minor skirmish involving radicals to an event akin to the American Revolution.

itself was transformed in the minds of Irish-Americans from a minor skirmish involving radicals to an event akin to the American Revolution.

Several articles in *The Irish World* illustrated England's mistreatment of the Irish by pointing out how "[t]he circumstances surrounding the Irish rebellion and the American revolution are exactly and precisely parallel."[86] In an editorial reprinted from *New York American*, "History Repeats Itself," the following parallels were noted:

> If we have not misunderstood the remarks of our morning and evening contemporaries in this town, the majority of them regard the Irishmen who have taken arms against England as ungrateful rebels who deserve to be hanged.
>
> The same papers are also vastly indignant because Germany, at war with England, has aided the Irish revolutionists in their effort to establish an independent Irish republic.
>
> A hundred and forty years ago a handful of English subjects, distantly related to some of us, rebelled against England with the object of setting up an independent American republic.
>
> The British and American Tory publications of that day regarded those who had taken arms against England as ungrateful rebels who deserved to be hanged.
>
> The same publications were also vastly indignant because France, at war with England, aided the American revolutionists in their efforts to establish an independent republic.[87]

Articles of this nature appeared in both the May 6 and May 13 issues.

Kentucky Irish American was neutral in its first report of the Rising but on May 6 it ran an editorial comparing Padraic Pearse and his collegues to George Washington and the signers of the Declaration of Independence. On May 13 the rebels were described in *The Catholic Standard and Times* as "men who have taken up arms to right a wrong, and laid them down in order to spare further effusion of blood [and] they are entitled to the benefit of their good intention, and should not be butchered by 'court-martial' process."[88]

Irish-Americans maintained a very strong sense of Irishness. Despite living thousands of miles away from the troubles in Ireland, and despite having lived in America for years, they still were concerned about the fate of their homeland. Indeed, the Irish-American papers in this study each included news from Ireland in every issue. But Irish-Americans also viewed themselves (and wanted others to view them) as American. When their loyalties for Ireland clashed with the loyalties for England held by non-immigrant Americans, the Irish-American press reconciled the two by comparing the Rising to the American Revolution and by portraying England as a common enemy to both Ireland and America.

Depth of Coverage

Coverage in the non-immigrant press consisted of stories based at least partially--and sometimes completely--upon official British dispatches. In fact, the *Times*, the *Globe*, and the *Tribune* often ran identical stories. None of the non-immigrant papers studied here discussed home rule issues or Irish independence. The Rising was never put into historical context or discussed in terms of other related events, such as the Ulster rebellion, or current issues concerning Irish citizens, such as press censorship and high taxes.

A front-page article in the April 26 issue of the *Times* credited Sinn Fein Society members with capturing the post office in Dublin, but did not say what the Sinn Fein Society was. This term was not likely a household name, even in a city that had a large Irish-American population as did New York, but no description of the group, its history, its goals, or its membership appeared in the *Times*, the *Globe*, or the *Tribune*. The *Times* had at least one correspondent in Dublin around the time of the Rising.[89] Although possibly unable to gather much information while the rebellion still raged, the correspondent surely would have been able to find out more about the insurrection and the organizations that took part in it after the rebels' capture.

Articles in the *Times*, the *Globe*, and the *Tribune*, repeated several phrases used by British authorities throughout coverage of the Rising. An official statement from London noted that "[i]n the course of the day soldiers arrived from the Curragh and the situation is now well in hand." On April 26, a *Times* article, in addition to quoting the entire official statement, went on to say that "[t]he Government last evening reported that the military authorities had the situation well in hand," that "Augustine Birrell, Chief Secretary for Ireland, . . . said that the situation was well in hand;" and that "Birrell's brief statement created an immense sensation in the crowded house [of Commons], and the members heard with relief his confident assurance that the situation in Dublin now is well in hand."[90]

Augustine Birrell referred to the insurgents as "dupes," and the term stuck. On both May 4 and May 12 *Times* articles quoted Birrell's remarks about "the dupes and their leaders."

Such repeated use of words and phrases coined by the establishment in Great Britain showed that the non-immigrant press accepted England's version of what was happening and identified more with British authorities than with the rebels or rebel sympathizers. Clearly the non-immigrant press trusted British authorities to be forthright concerning the Rising and saw no reason to question Britain's interpretation of the events in Dublin.

The Irish-American newspapers studied here, on the other hand, did not trust the British government and did not reprint British dispatches. (Editors at *Kentucky Irish American* noted that, "Cable dispatches Wednesday and early Thursday gave the impression that the British authorities had the situation in Ireland well in hand, but to these there can be given only little credence."[91]) Each paper also at least briefly reviewed events leading up to the Easter Rising and offered an opinion about the reason for the fighting in Dublin.

The Catholic Standard and Times had the least comprehensive coverage of the three papers examined but it did include some historical context and analysis in its articles. In addition to looking for causes of the Rising, the editors also attempted to put the actions of both the British and the Irish into context by comparing them to clashes the two nations had experienced in the past. The writer of "Ireland in Tears" said of the Easter Rising's aftermath, "The British Government in putting down the rebellion has committed a crime that recalls the punishment meted out to the rebels at Delhi and Lucknow, after the Indian Mutiny in 1857."[92] A similar reference was made in "Do Lunatics Rule Ireland?": "The English rulers over there now have shown their unfitness for the office into which they have been thrust over the heads of the Irish people by reverting to the evil policy of Pitt in the '98 rebellion, the sanguinary license to which the apologists applied the euphemism of 'rigor beyond the law.'"[93]

Kentucky Irish American, despite being the shortest newspaper studied here, offered the most thoughtful analysis of the events unfolding in Dublin. Rather than reiterating information that the editors were confident their readers were getting from the daily newspapers, they made better use of their paper's limited space. Front page articles on May 6 and May 13 discussed events in Ireland that may have led to the Rising, suggested possible outcomes of the Rising, and examined reactions to the Rising in the daily press.

The Irish World far surpassed the other papers studied with regards to comprehensive coverage. Much of its analysis seemed overly emotional but its biographical and historical information was quite thorough. Besides running a history of the Irish Volunteers on May 13, the paper also printed biographical sketches of the rebel leaders. Joseph Plunkett, one of the executed men, was the eighth member of his family to die a martyr for Irish ideals.[94] In an article entitled, "Family of Irish Catholic Patriots," *The Irish World* profiled one of his ancestors, Archbishop Oliver Plunkett, who was executed by the British in 1681.

On May 6 *The Irish World* ran a history of "Ireland's Fight For Freedom," with a synopsis of the six uprisings that took place from 1641 through 1916. Although the paper did not report on the executions that had taken place earlier in the week, it did run a very detailed article about the six-day Rising which included personal accounts from eyewitnesses to the Rising.

The Irish World also ran several articles written by Padraic Pearse before the Rising. These articles expressing Pearse's dreams for Ireland and his thoughts on Irish freedom offered readers a unique perspective on the Rising that was not available to them in the mainstream press.

Assignment of Blame

There was no difference of opinion within the Irish-American press concerning who was to blame for the upheaval in Ireland: Regardless of whether or not they supported the rebels at the onset, each paper studied here reported that the British government was to blame for the Rising.

Both *The Catholic Standard and Times* and *Kentucky Irish American* laid blame for the Easter Rising on Britain's handling of an earlier rebellion in northern Ireland. In 1913, 218,000 opponents of home rule organized in the province of Ulster, arming themselves with weapons obtained from Germany, and preparing a provisional government which would take control of Ulster on the day home rule became law.[95] Neither Edward Carson, the anti-home rule movement's leader, nor Bonar Law, leader of Britain's conservative party and supporter of Carson, were prosecuted for their acts. In fact, Carson was appointed to a ministry position when England entered World War I.

The Catholic Standard and Times' editorial, "Condonation of Rebellion Recoils," clearly stated that Britain's handling of the Ulster rebels set the stage for the uprising in Dublin.

> No steps were taken by the Governement to punish the ringleaders of that military conspiracy to defeat the will of Parliament.
>
> This coddling of rebellion was fatal. It was an invitation to the extreme element that dogs the footsteps of every movement for the betterment of struggling democracies to meet conspiracy by counter-conspiracy, and light on its own authority the torch of war.[96]

On May 6 a *Catholic Standard and Times* editorial reported that ". . . the causes of this phenomenal outbreak . . . as we suspected. . . had their origin in the license given to the Orange forces [Ulster rebels] to gather, organize and arm for the purpose of resisting the installation of the Home Rule government in Ireland."[97] The editors then went on to say that, ". . . the members of that [the British] Government should be in the dock along with the Irish prisoners in London."[98]

The editors at *Kentucky Irish American* shared this opinion but did not drive the point home so relentlessly; the Ulster rebellion was only mentioned once as a cause of the Easter Rising. A May 13th editorial concluded that, "If the rebellion in Ulster had been dealt with in a manner it deserved it is probable that England would not have had to deal with the rebellion in Dublin."[99] *Kentucky Irish American* reported other ways that Britain caused the violence in Dublin. The paper's May 6 analysis of the rebellion included these reasons for the Irish uprising:

> For the last five years Irishmen have been subjected to a great amount of exasperation from the English governing classes. First, the English governing classes armed a section of the Irish people in the hope that there would be a civil war that would disgrace Ireland. When the Nationalists attempted to arm, a regiment of British soldiers, under direction of their officer, Major Haig, fired on an unarmed crowd in the streets of Dublin, and then charged with bayonets, killing and wounding people. This was a week before war started. The episode has not been forgotten in Dublin. Then it is remembered, too, that a group of British officers were able to dictate to the Government terms which went toward making the home rule measure inoperative. The refusal to put the home rule measure into law has also exasperated the Irish opinion.[100]

On May 6 *The Irish World* published several lengthy articles that discussed causes of the outbreak in Dublin. Primary reasons noted were: that Ireland had been taxed beyond endurance to pay for the war in Europe; that the Irish had been bullied to enlist in the British army to such an extent that it amounted to conscription; that British military force was used against Irish newspapers that printed anti-enlistment stories; and that Irish citizens were charged with a penal offense if caught speaking out against enlistment. Furthermore, Britain's claims of being a champion of "the lesser nationalities"[101] merely added insult to injury, according to *The Irish World:* "English wrongdoing would be less offensive to the rest of mankind if it were not invariably accompanied by professions of superior righteousness. . ."[102] Similar British offenses were reiterated in an editorial: "Coercive measures to force Irishmen to fight for England, ruthless outrages against the 'freedom of the press,' the illegal arrest and deportation of patriotic Irishmen, and seizure of the people's foodstuffs made the expected happen in Dublin within the past week."[103] According to a May 13 article, "How England Goaded Ireland Into Rebellion," British authorities were planning to strip away even more rights of Irish citizens. "Orders On File At Dublin Castle Show That England Contemplated The Arrest Of The Officers Of Every Irish Ireland Organization And Of Every Irishman Suspected Of Loving His Country--England Demanded Absolute Sumission Of Irishmen Under Threats Of Massacre--The Irish Volunteers Preferred To Face The Enemy And Die," declared the article's subhead.

Non-immigrant papers, on the other hand, blamed Germany for the troubles in Dublin. Originally British authorities mistakenly thought Germany planned and backed the Rising, and dispatches from London blamed German agents for the Rising. Coverage in all three non-immigrant newspapers emphasized Germany's supposed role but neglected to explain why Ireland would join forces with one of England's ememies--especially when Irish soldiers were fighting for Britain in the war. A *Times* article quoted England's *Pall Mall Gazette* statement that "[b]efore Germany took the trouble to send arms to Ireland, she must have been satisfied of the existence of agents in that country who were prepared to received and use them in her interests."[104] But most Irish citizens, the coverage noted, were loyal to the Crown. A front-page *Times* article, "Irish at Front Atone for Revolt," on May 4 praised the brave men from Ireland who were fighting for Britain in the war, and reiterated Germany's part in the rebellion:

> Whatever comfort the Germans may have got out of their plot to stir up trouble in Ireland by inciting a few fanatical men to rebellion they found no comfort at all, but cold steel and machine gun fire, when they came up at the same time against the Irish race in the field of battle.[105]

Even as late as May 12 coverage in the *Times*, *Globe*, and *Tribune* included statements from British authorities attributing the rebellion to the Germans.

Conclusions

This study of Irish America's press coverage of Dublin's Easter Rising of 1916 asked how the Irish-American press intepreted Dublin's Easter Rising and how that interpretation differed from that presented by the non-immigrant American press.

Coverage in *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, *The Catholic Standard and Times*, and *Kentucky Irish American* varied both in amount and in its sympathy towards the Irish rebels. *The Irish World* treated the event as newsworthy from the onset, devoting many pages--including the front page--to issues surrounding the Rising. News of the Rising and its aftermath never made it to the front page of *The Catholic Standard and Times*, on the other hand, and the paper never ran more than two stories about the Rising in an issue. The aftermath of the Rising was more newsworthy than the Rising itself in *Kentucky Irish American*. Only after the rebel leaders were court-martialled and executed did this paper devote front-page space to the situation in Dublin. News of the Rising did not take displace regular features, domestic news, or other international news in any of the papers.

All three papers blamed the British government for the rebellion. The papers' editors denounced Britain for various blunders and offenses, including: encouraging the Dublin rebels by not dealing properly with an earlier rebellion in Ulster; pressuring Irishmen to enlist in Britain's war efforts; unreasonable taxation of Irish citizens; press censorship; and military brutality towards Irish citizens. Ireland's unhappy relationship with England remained fresh in the minds of the Irish living in America and as a result, the Irish-American press consistently portrayed England as the enemy. While the rest of America was pro-British, Irish-America was hoping for England's defeat as a world power. In this respect, Irish-America could not maintain its dual identity.

The Irish World supported the rebellion from the start but neither *The Catholic Standard and Times* nor *Kentucky Irish American* supported the rebels until news of their deaths reached America. Each paper studied had a unique interpretation of the Rising at its onset, as did their readers. *The Irish World* covered the rebellion as a valient attempt to overthrow England's oppressive rule. *Kentucky Irish American* initially interpreted it as a disturbance that was slightly interesting but not terribly important. *The Catholic Standard and Times* saw it as an act of cold-blooded violence and the cause of much heartache. Once the rebel leaders were sentenced to death, however, *Kentucky Irish American* and *The Catholic Standard and Times* reinterpreted the Rising. They, too, began reporting on the rebellion as an heroic act of Ireland's devoted sons and daughters.

Each paper offered more comprehensive coverage of the Rising than that found in daily papers by including historical and biographical information, analysis of the causes of the rebellion, and discussion of the potential consequences of the uprising. There are several possible reasons for the depth of coverage in the Irish-American press. To Irish-America, the Rising grew to represent centuries of fighting for freedom. Worldwide condemnation of England's treatment of the rebels gave Irish-America cause to hope that the Easter Rising would bring about Ireland's long-sought independence. The Rising, then, was one of the most significant events in Ireland at the time. Secondly, the in-depth coverage of the Rising frequently reinforced England's role as the villian, both historically and recently. Finally, highlighting past and present attempts to gain independence for Ireland reminded Irish-Americans of their cultural heritage and reinforced their emotional ties to their homeland.

A larger study is required to more fully understand Irish-American culture and how it was facilitated by the immigrant press. But the results of this study imply that, while early twentieth century Irish-Americans felt a strong bond to their homeland, making Irish nationalism an important issue to them, acceptance into American life was important as well.

Irish-Americans maintained a very strong sense of Irishness. Despite living thousands of miles away from the troubles in Ireland, and despite having lived in America for years, they still were concerned about the fate of their homeland. Indeed, the Irish-American papers in this study each included news from Ireland in every issue. But Irish-Americans also viewed themselves (and wanted others to view them) as Americans and felt an affinity with their new country. But the Easter Rising presented a situation where the dual identity of Irish-American was conflicted.

This dual connection to Ireland and America was reflected in the newspapers examined for this study. *The Irish World*'s calendar, for example, attempted to educate its readers in American history, and at the same time, remind them of notable events in Irish history. Each week the paper also devoted an entire page to news from all parts of the United States, followed by a full page of news from Ireland.

The Irish World and *Kentucky Irish American* tried to establish a link between American history and the events unfolding in Dublin. The Easter Rising was compared to the American Revolution several times in *The Irish World* and both newspapers likened the signers of the proclamation from the provisional government of the Irish Republic to George Washington and the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Irish-Americans found life in America very different from the life they left behind in Ireland. Most Irish immigrants came from rural backgrounds that did not prepare them for city life. And while most did not face a language barrier, most did face a religious barrier due to the distrust many non-immigrant Americans felt for Catholicism. Nevertheless, both their American and Irish identities were valued by the immigrants from Ireland.

Those who emigrated from Ireland left behind strong communal bonds. They attempted to establish similar ties within their communities in America, in part by establishing newspapers throughout America. The Irish-American press provided a means by which their Irish heritage could be maintained and interwoven with their new role as Americans.

NOTES

[1] Ruth Dudley Edwards, *Patrick Pearse: Triumph of Failure*, 280.

[2] Charles Duff, *Six Days to Shake an Empire*, 107.

[3] Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America*, 1-2.

[4] Eileen McMahon, "The Irish-American Press," in *The Ethnic Press in the United States: A Historical Analysis and Handbook,* Sally M. Miller, editor. (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1987), 177.

[5] Paul J. Foik, *Pioneer Catholic Journalism,* (New York: The United States Catholic Historical Society, 1930), ix.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants: A Study in Acculturation,* (Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959), 172.

[8] Dennis Clark, *The Irish in Philadelphia,* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), 101.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Clark, 102.

[11] Dennis Clark, *Erin's Heirs: Irish Bonds of Community,* (Kentucky: The University of Kentucky, 1991), 99.

[12] Clark, 101.

[13] Clark, 103

[14] Clark, 114.

[15] McMahon, 178.

[16] McMahon, 182-183.

[17] McMahon, 181.

[18] McMahon, 183.

[19] Lawrence J. McCaffrey, *Textures of Irish America* (New York: Syracuse Univeristy Press, 1992), 7.

[20] James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society,* 15.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Carey, 15 and 20.

[23] Carey, 20.

[24] Carey, 23.

[25] Carey, 18.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Graeme Turner, *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction,* 15.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Carey, 65.

[30] Pauly, "New Directions for Research in Journalism History," 33.

[31] Pauly, "New Directions for Research in Journalism History," 32.

[32] Carey, 20.

[33] Carey, 21.

[34] Pauly, "New Directions for Research in Journalism History," 32.

[35] Pauly, "New Directions for Research in Journalism History," 40.

[36] Dennis Clark, *Hibernia America: The Irish and Regional Cultures*, 191.

[37] Patrick Blessing, "Irish," in *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, Stephan Thernstrom, ed. (Cabridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980), 529.

[38] "Irish Situation Grave," *Kentucky Irish American*, April 29, 1916, 2.

[39] Tansill, 188.

[40] Carroll, 81.

[41] Carroll, 11.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Carroll, 12.

[44] Blessing, 529.

[45] Blessing, 531.

[46] Blessing, 539.

[47] Clark, *Erin's Heir s*, 100.

[48] Moody and Martin, 246.

[49] Ibid, 288-289.

[50] Sinn Féin translates to English as "we ourselves."

[51] Padraic Pearse, *Political Writings and Speeches*, 147.

[52] Moody and Martin, 305-306.

[53] Charles Callan Tansill, *America and the Fight for Irish Freedom 1866-1922*, 176.

[54] Washington *Post*, May 7, 1916. Quoted in F. M. Carroll, *American Opinion and the Irish Question, 1910-1923*, 57.

[55] Charles Duff, *Six Days to Shake an Empire*, 192.

[56] Ibid, p. 194.

[57] Patrick J. Blessing, *The Irish in America: A Guide to the Literature and the Manuscript Collections*, 290.

[58] Ibid.

[59] N.W. Ayers & Son, *American Newspaper Annual and Directory*, 664.

[60] McCaffrey, 148.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ayers, 854.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Clark, *Erin's Heirs*, 110.

[65] *Kentucky Irish American*, April 29, 1916, 2.

[66] Clyde F. Crews, *Mike Barry and the Kentucky Irish American*, 1.

[67] Ayers, 356.

[68] Crews, 3.

[69] Ayers, 677.

[70] Elmer Davis, *History of the New York Times 1851-1921* (New York: New York Times Company, 1921), 176.

[71] Davis, 262.

[72] Ayers, 393.

[73] Louis M. Lyons, *Newspaper Story: One Hundred Years of the Boston Globe.* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 48.

[74] Ayers, 393.

[75] Illinois Press Association, *Illinois Newspaper Directory and History* (Champaign-Urbana, IL: Illinois Press Association, 1934), 592.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Philip Kinsley, *The Chicago Tribune: Its First Hundred Years.* Volume III 1880-1900 (Chicago: The Chicago Tribune) 40.

[78] Ayers, 194.

[79] Boston *Globe*, April 26, 1916, 1.

[80] Chicago *Tribune*, April 26, 1916, 1.

[81] New York *Times*, April 26, 1916, 1.

[82] "Condonation of Rebellion Recoils," *The Catholic Standard and Times*, April 29, 1916, 4.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] "Irish Situation Grave," *Kentucky Irish American*, April 29, 1916, 2.

[86] "Irish Rebellion Compared to American Revolution," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, May 6, 1916, 11.

[87] "History Repeats Itself," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, May 6, 1916, 1.

[88] "Do Lunatics Rule Ireland?" *The Catholic Standard and Times*, May 13, 1916, 4.

[89] New York *Times*, April 26, 1916, 1.

[90] Ibid.

[91] "Irish Situation Grave," *Kentucky Irish American*, April 29, 1916, 2.

[92] "Ireland in Tears," *The Catholic Standard and Times*, May 6, 1916, 4.

[93] "Do Lunatics Rule Ireland?" *The Catholic Standard and Times*, May 13, 1916, 4.

[94] "Family of Irish Catholic Patriots," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, May 13, 1916, 2.

[95] Moody and Martin, 305.

[96] "Condonation of Rebellion Recoils," *The Catholic Standard and Times*, April 29, 1916, 4.

[97] "Ireland in Tears," *The Catholic Standard and Times*, May 6, 1916, 4.

[98] Ibid.

[99] "Shadow of Years," *Kentucky Irish American*, May 13, 1916, 2.

[100] "Rebellion a Forerunner," *Kentucky Irish American*, May 6, 1916, 1.

[101] "Ireland Insurgent," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, May 6, 1916, 5.

[102] Ibid.

[103] "The Causes of the Irish Conflict," *The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator*, May 6, 1916, 11.

[104] New York *Times*, May 4, 1916, 1.

[105] Ibid.

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New York *Tribune* (April 26, 1916; May 4, 1916; May 12, 1916)

The Catholic Standard and Times (April 29, 1916; May 6, 1916; May 13, 1916)

The Irish World and American Industrial Liberator (April 29, 1916; May 6, 1916; May 13, 1916)

'They're talking about us': Yellow journalism and the press of West Africa

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Abstract

Similarities have been suggested between privately owned independent newspapers in West Africa and the lurid yellow journals in the United States a century ago. Can the term "yellow journalism" properly be applied to the emergent independent newspapers in Africa? If so, what are implications for the press and for the region's fledgling democracies?

Those questions are central to this study, which examines yellow journalism and the debate it stirred in the United States, and assesses editorial and typographic content of a selection of independent newspapers published in West Africa in 1995. The study finds that while yellow journalism died out long ago in the United States, it lives on overseas as an angry epithet. The African newspapers examined do not consistently or uniformly exhibit the genre's classic characteristics, although some features of yellow journalism were apparent in Ghanaian newspapers.

'They're talking about us': Yellow journalism and the press of West Africa

Introduction

The history of the American newspapers is searched sometimes for clues or suggestions about the likely evolution of the press in Africa's developing countries. In the mid-1970s, for example, Dennis L. Wilcox speculated that African newspapers would increasingly come to resemble the penny press that emerged in the United States during the 1830s[1] and is credited with expanding the country's newspaper readership.[2]

More recently, and perhaps more intriguingly, a lecturer at the University of Ghana, Audrey Gadzekpo, noted similarities between the privately owned newspapers that emerged in Ghana during the 1990s and the lurid yellow journals of the United States a century ago. "When I read about the history of the private media in the U.S., in the time of yellow journalism," she said, "I think, 'They're talking about us!'"[3]

Her observation raises interesting and infrequently-posed questions about the content of the contemporary independent press[4] in sub-Saharan Africa. The early 1990s coincided with an unprecedented flowering of independent newspapers throughout the region,[5] an emergence typically associated with movement toward democratic pluralism. Although the experiments in press independence -- and in democratic governance[6] -- have been short-lived in many African countries,[7] they endure in others, notably Ghana, Benin, and Senegal. The flowering and the repression of the press in Africa have been well-documented; little scholarly research, however, has been conducted into the editorial content and typographic makeup of the independent newspapers.[8] Do the newspapers consistently exhibit the

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[1] Dennis L. Wilcox, *Mass Media in Black Africa: Philosophy and Control* (New York: Praeger, 1975), 135.

[2] Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States through 250 Years 1690 to 1940* (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 215.

[3] Daniel J. Sharfstein, "Ghana," *Africa Report*, May-June 1995, 48.

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[4] For purposes of this paper, the terms "independent press" and "independent newspapers" refer to print media owned and published without government control or approval.

[5] See, for example, Alpha Oumar Konaré, "Francophone Africa: Independent papers enjoy a whiff of freedom from Dakar to Kinshasa," *IPI Report* (May 1991), 20-1; Francis Kpatindé, "La presse privée enfin à la 'une,' [The private press finally on 'one']" *Jeune Afrique*, 30 January-5 February 1991, 12-15.

[6] See, "Democracy Hits the Barriers," *New African*, November 1992, 11-14; Howard French, "Can African Democracy Survive Ethnic Voting?" *New York Times*, 17 March 1996, sec. 4, p. 4.

[7] The independent press has been suppressed, or subjected to severe government crackdowns, since 1994 in Cameroon, Gambia, Ethiopia, Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire), Kenya, Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, Zaire, and Zambia. See, Howard French, "Press Faces Repression in Africa," *New York Times*, 14 January 1996, 11; Stephen Buckley, "Nigeria's Military Rulers Cracking Down on the Press," *Washington Post*, 7 April 1996, A18; "Trouble Spots in Africa," *IPI Report*, September-October 1995, 24; Thomas R. Lansner, "Peril and Progress: The Press in Africa," *Freedom Review*, March-April 1996, 43-6.

[8] No detailed content analyses of the press in sub-Saharan Africa have been published during the 1990s. Recent studies either have been surveys of the region's media, or general assessments about the state of traditional and mass communications in Africa. For an example of the former, see André-Jean Tudesq, *Feuilles d'Afrique: Etude de la presse de l'Afrique subsaharienne [Papers of Africa: A Study of the Press of sub-Saharan Africa]* (Talence, France: Aquitaine, 1995); for an example of the latter, see Louise M. Bourgault, *Mass Media in sub-Saharan Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995). Sharfstein, 48, presented a few examples of lurid and reckless reporting by Ghana's independent press, stating, "The independent papers . . . are constantly reporting or recycling scandals." But he did not pursue Gadzekpo's comment likening the press to the yellow journals of the United States.

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exaggerated and outlandish editorial and typographic features that characterized many American newspapers of the late 1890s and early 1900s? Indeed, can the term "yellow journalism" properly be applied to independent newspapers in Africa? If so, what are implications for the press and for the region's fledgling democracies? The period of yellow journalism in the United States, after all, was marked by vigorous debate about whether the genre was more harmful or beneficial to American society and its institutions.

Those questions are central to this study, which explores comparisons between the American yellow press and the contemporary independent press in West Africa. Such comparisons across time and place are not as improbable as they may initially appear. Lessons gleaned in one part of the world can be vital and applicable to another. Comparisons across time and place may illuminate similarities in press development, thereby signaling to emerging media systems the shortcomings to anticipate and the pitfalls to avoid. Such comparisons are likewise valuable in highlighting differences between media systems, which may allow for correcting erroneous impressions (such as, perhaps, whether "yellow journalism" may properly be invoked to describe late twentieth century media systems).[9]

This study has two principal focal points: The first is the examination of yellow journalism and the debate it stirred about consequences for American democracy; the second is an analysis of the editorial and typographic content of a selection of independent newspapers published in West Africa in 1995. A random sample of issues of each newspaper was analyzed for the presence of editorial and typographic features that typified the yellow journals in the United States.

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[9] Comparisons across time and place may also illuminate important differences within a region, between the anglophone and francophone newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa, for example.

Those elements perhaps were best summarized by the historian Frank Luther Mott, who wrote that yellow journalism "was founded . . . upon the familiar aspects of sensationalism -- crime news, scandal and gossip, divorces and sex, and stress upon the reporting of disasters and sports."[10] The genre, he stated, included specific "distinguishing" features: (1)headlines set in large type that "screamed excitement, often about comparatively unimportant news"; (2)lavish use of pictures, many of them irrelevant to the reporting; (3)"'faked' interviews and stories"; (4)a Sunday supplement containing color comics, and (5)"more or less ostentatious sympathy with the underdog, with campaigns against abuses suffered by the common people."[11] Yellow journalism, as characterized by such features, flourished about fifteen years in the United States, until about 1910.[12]

A finding in this study that the fledgling independent press in Africa has incorporated such features would hardly be encouraging. As it is, the press in Africa confronts an uncertain, even perilous existence: The threat of government crackdowns is never remote. Financial hardships are common, given that advertising revenues are usually meager. In many countries, more than 60 percent of the adult population is illiterate in many countries.[13] The press in Africa surely would not ease its myriad burdens, or improve its prospects for long-term survival, by indulging in classic characteristics of yellow journalism, particularly in the invention and routine exaggeration of news reports. To do so would be to invite repression.

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[10] Mott, 539.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid. See also, Will Irwin , "The Spread and Decline of Yellow Journalism," in *The American Newspaper* (Ames, IO: Iowa State, 1969), 20.

[13] For recent discussions about the myriad problems facing Africa's independent press, see, among others, Bourgault, *Mass Media in Sub-Saharan Africa,* and Lansner, 43-6.

Misconceptions and origins of yellow journalism

Although the genre of yellow journalism died out in the United States long ago, the term lives on, and is associated with many enduring misconceptions. Often, for example, "yellow journalism" is used interchangeably with "sensationalism," erroneously so.[14] To be sure, yellow journalism *was* sensational. But as Mott's enumeration of the genre's characteristics indicate, it was sensational, and more.

The term lives on also as an epithet, a term of contempt to describe real or perceived shortcomings in news-gathering practices. "Yellow journalism" was invoked during the Cold War to denigrate Western journalists attending international communications conferences.[15] It also has been used to criticize international reporting of contentious issues in developing countries, such as Nigeria's expulsion in 1983 of two million illegal immigrants. Nigeria's official radio responded to the critical reports by stating:

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[14] Mott, 539. His caution was explicit: "Yellow journalism . . . must not be considered as synonymous with sensationalism." Other historians have noted that "sensationalism" was a well-established element of news long before the period of the yellow press in the United States. See, for example, Mitchell Stephens, *A History of News: From the Drum to the Satellite* (New York: Viking, 1988), 2. Stephens wrote: "Sensationalism appears to be a technique or style that is rooted somehow in the nature of the news." See also, Warren Francke, "An Argument in Defense of Sensationalism: Probing the Popular and Historiographical Concept," *Journalism History 5:3* (Autumn, 1978), 73. Francke argued that although there have been peaks in sensational treatment of the news in the U.S. press, "true valleys are hard to find."

[15] Aline Mosby, "Americans oppose UNESCO journalists' plan," *United Press International*, 17 February 1981. Available on Nexis. The dispatch quoted a representative of the Communist-backed International Organization of Journalists as saying American journalists in the U.S.

> If Nigeria were a white country, the deportation of illegal aliens . . . would have been seen by some section[s] of the foreign press as a very correct step in the right direction. These white reporters -- better described as yellow journalists since they practice the long-condemned yellow journalism -- would have hailed the [expulsion order] as the best international law on human rights. But Nigeria, a black country, belongs to the Third World. It could hardly therefore be seen by the yellow journalists [as] ever being anything to stand by.[16]

Given the many ways the term has been misappropriated and loosely applied, in Africa and elsewhere, it is important to examine briefly the emergence and the reach of yellow journalism in the United States, and to revisit the prolonged and largely inconclusive debate about the dangers and virtues yellow journalism held for the country. The debate may be particularly relevant to the exuberant and challenging independent press in Africa's emerging democracies. To be sure, trends in media development will not be everywhere similar. However, the excesses that were associated with yellow journalism can perhaps be replicated elsewhere, with detrimental consequences.

Historians date the emergence of yellow journalism to 1896, or soon after William Randolph Hearst purchased the *New York Journal*.[17] Hearst almost immediately initiated what

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delegation at a UNESCO conference were representatives of "publishers who piled up profits with sensationalism and yellow journalism."

[16] "Nigerian Criticism of Western News Media," *British Broadcasting Corporation Summary of World Broadcasts*, 16 February 1983. Available on Nexis.

[17] Mott, 539.

has been called "the fiercest battle for circulation in American history."[18] It was a sensation-driven challenge to the *New York World,*[19] then the city's dominant newspaper. The *World* was owned by Joseph Pulitzer and had indulged in sensation for at least ten years before Hearst's arrival,[20] seeking invariably to position itself as the journal for the working class.[21] Hearst relentlessly raided Pulitzer's editors and reporters, notably the *World's* talented Sunday staff.[22] The rivalry grew so intense, and so inescapable, that within a year of Hearst's arrival in New York,[23] "yellow journalism" had been coined to describe and to disparage a lusty and provocative new genre of newspapering.[24] Even before then, press critics such as E.L.

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[18] John D. Stevens, *Sensationalism and the New York Press* (New York: Columbia University, 1991), 80.

[19] Stevens, 82, noted: "Hearst immediately challenged Pulitzer on size and price [of the respective newspapers]. The *World* was publishing ten or twelve pages and charging two cents, so Hearst priced his paper at one cent and offered sixteen pages. . . . Hearst also lowered ad rates." Moreover, Stevens notes, the *Journal's* front pages looked much like those of the *World.*

[20] Stevens, 99. See also, Michael Emery and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretative History of the Mass Media* (6th ed.) (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1988), 227, and Sidney Kobre, *The Yellow Press and Gilded Age Journalism* (Florida State: 1964), 47-48.

[21] Stevens, 73.

[22] Stevens, 86. See also, W.A. Swanberg, *Citizen Hearst: A Biography of William Randolph Hearst* (New York: Scribner, 1961), 81-2.

[23] Hearst, son of a millionaire silver miner, was publisher of the *San Francisco Examiner* before acquiring the *New York Journal.* See Swanberg, 80-82. Swanberg likened Hearst's newspapers to "printed entertainment and excitement -- the equivalent in newsprint of bombs exploding, bands blaring, firecrackers popping, victims screaming, flags waving, canons roaring, . . . and smoke rising from the singed flesh of executed criminals." Swanberg, 162.

[24] The inspiration for the term is a matter of some dispute. Many historians say the term sprang from the rivalry between Hearst and Pulitzer over a popular color cartoon, the central figure of which was a bald, toothless, streetwise urchin who wore a yellow nightshirt and was called the "yellow kid." Hearst lured the "yellow kid's" creator, cartoonist Richard F. Outcault, from the *World* in 1896. Pulitzer responded by running a rival "yellow kid." From the rivalry supposedly

Godkin were lamenting newspapers' descent into the trivial and the vulgar.[25]

Yellow journalism spread rather quickly, if not widely, from New York.[26] Most U.S. newspapers appear to have resisted the tide. A content analysis published in 1900 reported finding that, of 147 daily newspapers in twenty-one major U.S. markets, forty-seven were distinctly yellow, forty-five were certainly not (and classified "conservative"), and fifty-five exhibited elements of both genres and were classified "uncertain."[27] The 1900 content

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sprang the term "yellow journalism," according to Mott, 526; Emery and Emery, 232; Swanberg, 82; Willard G. Bleyer, *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), 339-40; Jim Cullen, *The Art of Democracy: A Concise History of Popular Culture in the United States* (New York: Monthly Review, 1996), 118. The other version is that Hearst's yellow-clad marathon bicycling team, which raced from San Francisco to New York in the summer of 1896, gave rise to the term. This view is argued persuasively in Bill Blackbeard, "The Yellowing of Journalism: The Journal-Examiner Bicycle Marathon versus the Yellow Kid," in Richard F. Outcault, *The Yellow Kid: A Centennial Celebration of the Kid Who Started the Comics* (Northampton, MA: Kitchen Sink, 1995), 56-61. Historians tend to agree that the term was coined by Ervin Wardman in an editorial published September 2, 1896, in the *New York Press*.

[25] See, E.L. Godkin, "The Unfortunate Press," *The Nation* (62), 2 May 1896, 355. Godkin noted Hearst's purchase of the *New York Journal* and wrote: "We were in hopes that his millions would go to raise its quality and make it a rational and hopeful addition to the New York newspapers. Apparently nothing was further from his thoughts. He went to work at once . . . to rival the worst of the others in their worst tricks -- wilder sensations, sillier inventions . . . than any of its contemporaries."

[26] While the press in the South was little influenced by yellow journalism, some newspapers in Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Denver, St. Louis, and San Francisco, among other cities, were swept up in the yellow tide. Mott, 539-40.

[27] Delos F. Wilcox, "The American Newspaper: A Study in Social Psychology," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, (16) July-December 1900, 78. Operationalizing the study was difficult, the author acknowledged. After examining 15 yellow journals and 15 "conservative" or non-yellow newspapers, he derived these lists of essential characteristics. The yellow journals, he said, were characterized by news of crime and vice, illustrations, want advertisements, medical advertisements, and self-advertisements. The "conservative" newspapers were defined by political and business news, letters and exchanges, and miscellaneous advertisements. Wilcox, p. 77. Wilcox also noted, however: "The definition of a yellow journal is a matter of some difficulty. In general, yellow journalism is about the

analysis also indicated that yellow journals were typically afternoon publications that had larger circulations, cost less per copy, and were more likely to publish Sunday editions than their "conservative" rivals.[28]

The expansion of the yellow press appears to have peaked shortly after the turn of the twentieth century.[29] By 1910, few American newspapers could be termed "distinctly yellow."[30] The genre left lasting contributions to modern journalism, notably in typographic display and the Sunday supplement.[31]

Its other contributions, and its broader consequences for American democracy, certainly are much more debatable. Indeed, the period of yellow journalism was accompanied by a sustained yet largely inconclusive debate about the dangers and virtues of the genre. Elements of the debate -- notably, whether the yellow press pushed the United States into war with Spain in 1898 -- stretched well into the twentieth century.

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same as extreme sensational journalism, and the latter may perhaps be defined as journalism that stimulates man's social senses merely for the sake of the pleasure and excitement attendant upon the stimulation." Wilcox, 76.

[28] Wilcox, 77-79.

[29] One reason the expansion of the yellow press peaked then may have been the assassination in 1901 of President William McKinley, a subject of scathing attacks in Hearst's *Journal*. An editorial in the *Journal* in April 1901 asserted, "If bad institutions and bad men can be got rid of only by killing, then the killing must be done." Those words were recalled when McKinley was shot in September 1901, and a furor enveloped the *Journal* and Hearst's other newspapers. Mott, 540-1.

[30] Ibid., 540.

[31] Ibid., 539. Mott cited as contributions "banner heads, free use of pictures, and the Sunday supplement." See also, Bleyer, 386. He argued that the *New York World* should be credited with those and other innovations, including "local and national crusades in the interest of common people."

Dangers – and virtues – of yellow journalism

The Spanish-American War, which lasted less than four months and ended Spain's dominion of Cuba and the Philippines, brought yellow journals to egregious depths.[32] Backed by little if any direct evidence, the *Journal* accused Spain of planting explosives that destroyed the warship *Maine* in Havana's harbor in February 1898.[33] The *Maine's* destruction prompted the *World* to abandon appeals for restraint and call for war to punish Spain.[34] The media frenzy[35] was such that some scholars, notably Joseph Wisan and Marcus M. Wilkerson, concluded that war became irresistible and inevitable.[36] Wisan wrote, flatly: "The

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[32] See, for example, Francis Williams, *The Right to Know: The Rise of the World Press* (London: Longmans, 1969), 63. Williams described the prelude to the war "a quintessential example of journalism at its most fraudulent and irresponsible." Mott, 532, noted that "journalistic jingoism" was not confined to the *Journal* and the *World*, that newspapers in Boston, Chicago, New Orleans, and San Francisco, among other cities, helped stimulate sentiment for war. Stevens, 90, stated: "The deliberate exploitation and exaggeration of events in Cuba [leading to the war] was the natural, perhaps inevitable, result of spiraling competition between two rich and egotistical publishers," Hearst and Pulitzer.

[33] Swanberg, 137. He wrote: "Hearst's coverage of the *Maine* disaster still stands as an orgasmic acme of ruthless, truthless newspaper jingoism." Swanberg also noted that for a week after the *Maine's* destruction, Hearst's *Journal* "devoted a daily average of eight and one-half pages to the *Maine* and war."

[34] *New York World*, 1 April 1898, cited in Joseph Wisan, *The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press* (New York: Columbia University, 1934), 423.

[35] Stevens, 97, wrote: "*The Journal* panted for the start of hostilities. Sample headlines: Fleet and Army Ready for Action (April 9); On the verge of War (April 13); Ready Blow for Spain! (April 16); Now to Avenge the Maine! (April 20). Headline type was often four to five inches high. On April 25, when the headline was Congress Declares War, rockets were fired from the *Journal* building."

[36] Wisan, 455. He wrote: "The Spanish-American War . . . was a popular crusade. Neither the business interests of the nation nor the Government executives desired it. The public, aroused by the press, demanded it." Marcus M. Wilkerson, *Public Opinion and the Spanish-American War: A Study in War Propaganda*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State, 1932), 132. Wilkerson wrote: "Led by the *World* and the *Journal*, partisan newspapers, after carefully arranging the stage for the final act in the drama of war propaganda, 'played up' the *Maine* explosion without restraint and left the American public reeling from a bombardment of

Spanish-American War would not have occurred had not the appearance of Hearst in New York journalism precipitated a bitter battle for newspaper circulation."[37] Commentators in 1898 were, however, less certain about how the press barrage was influencing public opinion. Godkin, for example, deplored the war hysteria of the *Journal* and the *World*[38] but noted that effects of their reports appeared limited. He wrote in March 1898:

> Nothing could be more curious than the contrast between the wild aspect of the first pages of our penny dreadfuls and the calm demeanor of the persons who are seen reading them. . . . A few years ago the mere sight of a newspaper got up in this extraordinary style, with headlines in bill poster style reaching quite across the page, would have started a panic. . . . Now they are read with entire passivity, even although they declare war to be imminent.[39]

Other historians, particularly those writing in the second half of the twentieth century, have discounted the view that the yellow press was decisive in precipitating war with Spain. Rather, these historians have argued that economic forces and motives within the United States better

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half-truths, misstatement of facts, rumors, and faked dispatches. Sensing the popular tide, a hesitant administration, egged on by a 'jingo' Congress, proposed war with a national already on the verge of collapse from internal strife and rebellion."

[37] Wisan, 458. He also wrote that the insurrection by Cuban rebels that preceded the United States' war against Spain "furnished a unique opportunity to the proprietors of the sensational press to prove their enterprise and provide the type of news the sold papers. Even the conservative journals . . . were compelled . . . to devote considerably more space to Cuban affairs than they otherwise would have done."

[38] He wrote in February 1898, "Nothing so disgraceful as the behavior of two of these newspapers this week has been known in the history of American journalism." Godkin, *New York Evening Post*, 19 February 1898, cited in Bleyer, 377.

[39] Godkin, "The Week," *The Nation* (66) 3 March 1898, 157. Godkin also wrote that the yellow press "has been steadily raising the tone of its yelling till it has reached the highest limit possible. The louder it shrieks, the less attention is paid to it."

explain the conflict's origins. Philip Foner, for example, said the yellow press frenzy and the sinking of the *Maine* were factors contributing to the conflict. But the central explanation, he wrote, was the United States' interest in preventing Cuban independence, and opening Cuba and the Philippines to U.S. economic and political domination.[40]

If anything, however, the debate about the influence of the yellow press -- its virtues and its dangers -- intensified[41] after the Spanish-American War and the turn of the twentieth century. As one commentator wrote in 1905: "No papers were ever before . . . so execrated and so beloved as are the yellow journals."[42]

Detractors deplored the yellow newspapers as perils to democracy, in that they blithely cultivated mistrust about government officials and institutions,[43] corrupted public opinion,[44] intruded shamelessly into lives of private and public citizens,[45] and diminished the capacity of the press to instruct and inform.[46]

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[40] Philip Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism 1895-1902*, vol. 1 (New York: Monthly Review, 1972), 310.

[41] At times, the arguments about the yellow press were overstated, and often assumed the press was capable of influencing large audiences -- effects of the kind that social scientists researching the news media in the mid- and late-twentieth century have not been able to detect. For discussion about research into media effects, see Shearon A. Lowery and Melvin L. DeFleur, *Milestones in Mass Communication Research: Media Effects* 3d ed. (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1995), 399-404.

[42] Lydia Kingsmill Commander, "The Significance of Yellow Journalism," *The Arena* (34) August 1905, 150. She also wrote: "The yellow journals, like the American people, though in the extreme, has also its full share of virtues. It is vulgar and emotional; but it is kind and generous, active, wide-awake, and progressive." Commander, 151.

[43] See, George W. Alger, "Sensational Journalism and the Law," *Atlantic Monthly* 91 (February 1903), 151.

[44] See, for example, George Harvey, "Comment," *Harper's Weekly*, 20 October 1906. The commentary assailed Hearst, then running unsuccessfully for New York governor as the Democratic Party nominee. The commentary stated: "The man . . . who, as the owner of newspapers, would corrupt public opinion is the most dangerous enemy of the state. We may talk about the perils incident to the concentration of wealth, about the perils flowing from a disregard of fiduciary responsibility, about abuses of privilege . . . but all of these menaces, great as they are, are nothing compared with a deliberate, persistent, artful,

Godkin lamented as early as 1896: "Gravity either in discussing or in managing our affairs is fast vanishing under the journalistic influence" of an outlandish press. "We laugh over everything, make fun of everybody, and think it will 'all come out right in the end,' just like ill-bred children who hate to have their games interrupted."[47] The threat soon came to be seen as much more than a debasing of public discourse. Yellow journalism was said to strike squarely at underpinnings of democratic society, notably the rule of law. George W. Alger wrote in 1903:

> To thoughtful men, the severest charge yet to be made against this new journalism is not merely the influence it attempts to exert . . . but that wantonly and without just cause it endeavors to destroy in the hearts and minds of thousands of newspaper readers a deserved confidence in the integrity of the courts and a patient faith in the ultimate triumph of justice by law.[48]

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purchased endeavor to pervert and vitiate the public judgment. Why? Because on that judgment we must all of us rely in a self-governing community."

[45] Charles Whibley, "The American Yellow Press: An English View," *The Bookman* (25) May 1907, 239. He wrote: "The yellow press is not obscene -- it has not the courage for that. It is merely personal and impertinent. No one's life is secure from its spies. No privacy is sacred. . . . A hundred reporters are ready, at a moment's notice, to invade houses, to uncover secrets, to molest honest citizens with indiscreet questions."

[46] See, Godkin, "The Influence of the Press," *The Nation* (65), 25 November 1897, 411.

[47] Godkin, "The Unfortunate Press," *The Nation* (62), 7 May 1896, 356.

[48] Alger, 151. He also wrote, 150: "In a country whose political existence, in the ultimate analysis, depends so largely upon the intelligence and honesty of its judges, the general welfare requires not merely that judges should be men of integrity, but that the people should believe them to be so. It is this confidence which [yellow] journalism has set itself deliberating at undermining."

The yellow press had eloquent and witty[49] defenders, however. Most of them acknowledged the genre's flaws but argued that, overall, its virtues counted for more. "On the whole, the yellow journals are doing their fair share of good in the land," the editors of *The Independent* magazine wrote in 1900.[50]

What critics such as Godkin and Alger saw as the trivializing or threatening consequences of yellow journalism, apologists saw as much-needed diversion and instruction for America's masses of immigrants and poorly educated citizens. Lydia Kingsmill Commander, writing in *The Arena* magazine in 1905, asserted:

> The principal problem that confronts us in our struggle to develop an American democracy is the education and uplifting of this vast mass. . . . Theories of every sort are constantly advanced; but the one institution that is successfully coping with this problem day after day, and getting practical results, is the yellow journal. It gives the people what they want -- sensation, crime and vulgar sports -- thus inducing them to read. But having secured its audience, it teaches them, simply, clearly, patiently, the lessons they need.[51]

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[49] Editorial writers for *The Independent* magazine were felicitous in writing about the yellow press in 1900. See, "The Other Side of Yellow Journalism," *The Independent*, 29 March 1900, 785. They wrote: "Just as there are orthodox heretics, poor millionaires, and *second* families of Virginia, so there are merits in yellow journals."

[50] Ibid., 786.

[51] Commander, 152, 155. She wrote: "Thus, in the adult kindergarten of yellow journalism, the great underlying mass of the nation, formerly unconsidered and untaught, are prepared for the duties of American citizenship."

In addition to promoting literacy, readership,[52] and education,[53] the yellow press was often praised for aggressive campaigns[54] that exposed abuses by trusts and thwarted suspicious deals to sell public utility franchises.[55] The *Journal*, for example, brought legal action to dissolve a price-gouging scheme by the ice trust in New York City in 1897.[56]

Much to the consternation of critics, the yellow journals of New York attracted editorial contributions from the city's prominent businessmen, clergy, and lawyers.[57] That support tended to undercut criticism that yellow journalism represented an acute threat to American institutions. As one critic wrote in 1901: "With what force can we condemn a newspaper for its vulgarity, indecency, and general demoralization, with what force can we criticize the ignorant and the untrained for reading such a paper, when our very teachers of morality pronounce it a fit instructor for them?"[58]

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[52] The yellow press also was credited with enlarging newspaper readership among women. See Irwin, "The Spread and Decline of Yellow Journalism," 20.

[53] Kobre also cited the yellow press for promoting reading and broader understanding of local, national, and international affairs. Kobre, iii, iv.

[54] See, for example, "The Other Side of Yellow Journalism," 786. The editorial stated: "What high-class papers are quicker than [the yellow journals] to help the masses, show them their rights and, if need be, fight for them?"

[55] Stevens, 85. Hearst in particular was adamant about municipal ownership of public utilities. Stevens wrote: "With some justification, he took credit for blocking private takeovers of trolley, light, and gas franchises. Certainly that was a popular position among the working class, but it was also supported by many businessmen." Mott, 522, suggested that the *Journal's* legal action in 1896 to prevent a gas-franchise takeover proved so popular that it effectively thwarted a reformist-led movement to boycott the newspaper.

[56] Commander, 151.

[57] Commander, 152. She wrote: "Almost every man and woman of note at some time contributes to the yellow press. It would be much easier to give a list of those who never write for these papers than to enumerate those who do."

Ironically, as the debate about the genre was intensifying, the practice of yellow journalism was fading. Well before 1910, most yellow journals had "toned down . . . to pastels."[59] Meanwhile, fact-based journalism as exemplified by the *New York Times* was on the rise. As one scholar has written, the *New York World* "may have set the pace for modern mass-circulation journalism," but the somber *Times* "set the standard."[60]

Echoes of the arguments stirred by the debate about yellow journalism can be detected in discussions about the role of an independent press in sub-Saharan Africa. The rhetoric is indeed sometimes reminiscent of the debate about the dangers and virtues of yellow journalism. The independent press in Africa is regarded, alternately, as a barrier to national development, as a vital force in promoting understanding about democratic systems, and as a tool for enhancing literacy.

African authorities, such as Ghana's president, Jerry J. Rawlings, are prone to describe the upstart press as a disruptive and destabilizing force. Rawlings has assailed Ghana's independent newspapers for "doing more harm to [national] development than encouraging it."[61] Conversely, a small body of scholarly literature suggests the press can be vital in instructing Africans about the fundamentals of democratic rule and market economies. One scholar wrote in 1993:

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[58] E. P. Clark, "Responsibility for Yellow Journalism," *The Nation* (73), 26 September 1901, 239.

[59] Stevens, 100.

[60] Michael Schudson, *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 107.

[61] Melvis Dzisah, "Media-Ghana: Independent Press Breaks Loose," *Inter Press Service*, 27 February 1995. Available on Nexis. Extreme variations of that argument have been invoked over the years in Africa. Kenneth Kaunda, then president of Zambia, once told an international audience of journalists in 1968: "The press is capable of making or destroying governments given appropriate conditions; it can cause war or make conditions for peace. It can promote development or create

> The success of the democratic experiment in Africa may well depend on how the press articulates the concept of democracy. The question for media professionals in Africa should be fairly straight forward: Is the press an active agent of change or simply a part, albeit a quintessential one, of an evolutionary process?[62]

Indeed, some independent newspapers in Africa readily seek to position themselves in such a way, as agents of democratic pluralism. The *Ghanaian Voice*, for example, has committed itself to open its columns to opinions of "any party affiliation or political persuasion. We believe, by this, we can enhance the promotion of multi-party democracy in the country."[63]

Just as the yellow press in America was recognized as a force promoting mass literacy and education, the independent press in Africa sometimes is expected to cultivate such a role.[64] Adult illiteracy rates in some countries reach 75 percent or more.[65]

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difficulties in the way of development." Kenneth Kaunda, address to the International Press Institute, Nairobi, Kenya, 1968, cited in Richard Carver, *Truth from Below: The Emergent Press in Africa* (London: International Centre Against Censorship, 1991), 10.

[62] Eric Chinje, "The Media in Emerging African Democracies: Power, Politics, and the Role of the Press," *The Fletcher Forum,* Winter 1993, 63. See also, Francis P. Kasoma, "The role of the independent media in Africa's change to democracy," *Media, Culture and Society* 17 (1995), 537-55. Kasoma argues an independent press is a prerequisite for democratic rule in Africa.

[63] "Editor's note," *Ghanaian Voice*, 28 September-1 October, 1995, 1. Although the newspaper routinely criticizes Rawlings, Ghana's president, it periodically publishes letters praising the chief executive, who came to power in a coup d'état in 1981.

[64] See, for example, Monique Pagès, "L'Explosion de la presse en Afrique francophone au sud du Sahara [The Explosion of the press in francophone African South of the Sahara]" *Afrique Contemporaine* (159),

Thus, similarities across time and place appear to be present: Elements of the debate in the United States about democracy and the yellow press resonate, if faintly, in sub-Saharan Africa in the late twentieth century. But can it be said that yellow journalism is afoot in Africa?

Methods and results: A pale shade of yellow

The independent newspapers analyzed in this study are tabloid-sized journals published in Ghana, Benin, and Senegal -- countries where in recent years an independent press critical of government has taken hold.[66] The Ghanaian newspapers, *Free Press* and *Ghanaian Voice*, are published in English and appear twice-weekly. Each issue contains twelve pages. The other newspapers in the study are published in

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3d quarter 1991, 82. She wrote: "Some suggest that a new category of the press, establishing as its objective the support of literacy in the population, could also be developed, which would permit in time an expansion to rural areas of newspapers that too often are limited to the capital." Translation mine.

[65] For example, illiteracy is 40 percent in Ghana, 75 percent in Benin, and 62 percent in Senegal. See Tudesq, *Feuilles d'Afrique*, 220. The barrier of illiteracy is not insurmountable, however. Newspapers often are read to those who cannot read, in keeping with Africa's strong oral traditions. See Carver, 12. He wrote: "African cultures being overwhelmingly oral, there are other ways of disseminating the news which are less readily censored than is the press. What British [colonial] administrators used to call the bush telephone . . . has proved a highly effective means of conveying accurate information on important events."

[66] Besides being countries where the independent press is critical of government, Ghana, Benin, and Senegal all have long traditions of expressing dissent through newspapers. Such traditions date to the nineteenth century for Ghana and to the early twentieth century for Benin and Senegal. However, authoritarian or single-party governments have periodically stifled or suppressed press freedom in all three countries since they became self-governing. Ghana gained independence from Britain in 1958; Benin and Senegal were granted independence from France in 1960. For discussion about the colonial era newspapers in Benin, Ghana, and Senegal, see Rosalynde Ainslie, *The Press in Africa: Communications Past and Present* (London: Gollancz, 1966), 22-5, 130-2.

French. They are *Le Forum de la Semaine*, an eight-page weekly in Cotonou, Benin, and *Wal Fadjri*, an eight-page daily in Dakar, Senegal.[67]

The period selected for study was the last half of 1995, which allows for a reasonably up-to-date assessment.[68] Random samples of each newspaper were drawn according to "constructed" time periods,[69] and each newspaper issue in this study was analyzed for classic elements of yellow journalism.[70] Specifically, each issue was coded for the presence or absence of the following: (1)headlines on page one at least one inch in height; (2)prominent display of photographs; (3)articles that take up causes of the underdog or challenge powers that be; (4)prominent news reports that appear improbable or unlikely (because sources were few or obviously dubious); (5)reports about popular sports; (6)a separate news and entertainment supplement, and (7)prominent reports about crimes, scandals, and disasters.[71]

Results of the content analysis are shown in Table 1. The figures represent the percentage of newspaper issues that exhibited the characteristic in question. For example, all eighteen issues (100 percent) of the *Free Press* examined included at least one article that took up causes of the underdog or challenged the powers that be, whereas just eleven issues (46 percent) of *Wal Fadjri* contained such reporting. Forty percent of the issues of *Ghanaian Voice* carried reports about sports while none (0 percent) of the issues of *Forum de la Semaine* contained sports reporting. Such a coding scheme is liberal and inclusive, and would identify characteristics of "yellow journalism" even in borderline cases.

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[67] The newspapers examined in this study are part of the African newspaper collection at Northwestern University, Evanson, IL.

[68] The sampling period appears adequate for addressing the issues central to the study, whether or to what extent the contemporary press in Africa exhibits elements of yellow journalism. For a discussion about adequacy of sampling periods, see Richard W. Budd, Robert K. Thorp, and Lewis Donohew, *Content Analysis of Communications* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), 20-21, and Bernard Berelson, *Content Analysis in Communication Research* (New York: Hafner, 1971), 174-79.

[69] For the Ghanaian newspapers, both bi-weeklies, every third edition was selected for study. For the weekly *Forum de la Semaine*, every other issue was chosen. For the daily *Wal Fadjri*, every eighth edition was selected. Constructed-period sampling allows the drawing of a representative selection while minimizing confounding factors such as periods in which news volume varies markedly. For discussion about constructed-period sampling see, Budd, 25-6.

[70] Mott's enumeration of the characteristics of yellow journalism was closely followed in developing this study's categories. Mott, 539.

[71] The author was the sole coder.

Table 1. African newspapers and components of yellow journalism. (Figures are rounded percentages.)

	Free Press (N=18)	***Voice*** (N=15)	***Wal Fadjri*** (N=24)	***Forum*** (N=9)
headlines[72]	100%	100%	100%	67%
photos	0	20	4	0
underdog	100	80	46	0
unlikely	50	33	0	11
sports	39	40	100	0
supplement	0	0	0	0
crime/scandal	89	80	29	44

The analysis of editorial and typographic content of the newspapers sampled indicates that the press in West Africa exhibits only a few classic characteristics of yellow journalism. Although sample size limits the ability to generalize, the results of the content analysis are nonetheless suggestive of patterns. In Ghana, in particular, the independent newspapers can be sensational, lurid, and reckless: But they are, at most, a faint shade of yellow. Newspapers in the francophone countries, Benin and Senegal, are considerably less likely to exhibit the classic features of yellow journalism. They are not remotely yellow.

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[72] Categories in the rows are **headlines**: page one headlines of one inch or more; **photos**: prominent display of photographs); **underdog**: prominent reports that take up the cause of the underdog or challenge the powers that be; **unlikely**: prominent articles that appear unlikely or improbable, because sources are few or obviously dubious; **sports**: reports about popular sports; in Africa, soccer is the leading sport; **supplement**: a separate supplement with color comics; **crime/scandal**: prominent reports about news of crimes, scandals, and disasters.

The newspapers share certain typographical features, notably prominent page one headlines. Prominent use of photographs is rare, however, and none of the newspapers publish a separate supplement.

Striking differences are evident in the editorial content, however. Unlike the French-language newspapers, the Ghanaian newspapers regularly carry reports championing underdog causes. The newspapers are unabashed and little restrained in their advocacy. The *Ghanaian Voice*, for example, began a article about a parliament member who had built a house on land designated for a rural bank by invoking phrases that certainly were evocative of the yellow press: "The way and manner people in authority who are entrusted with the welfare of the people keep on looting the very people they are supposed to protect is very, very amazing."[73]

The appetite of the Ghanaian press for sensational news -- crime, scandals, and disasters -- is far keener than that of *Forum* or *Wal Fadjri*. Moreover, the *Free Press* and *Ghanaian Voice* are more likely to publish reports so thinly documented as to be improbable -- another classic characteristic of yellow journalism. During the period of this study, the *Free Press* twice published on page one stories suggesting that Rawlings, Ghana's president, planned to kill political opponents during trips to Britain and the

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[73] "MP Turns Rural Bank into Private Residence," *Ghanaian Voice* [Accra, Ghana], 6-10 September 1995, 1.

United States.[74] Another *Free Press* report cited "rumors in town" as the source for a report that one of Rawlings' lieutenants had purchased an expensive house outside Accra, the capital.[75] The *Ghanaian Voice* published a similarly improbable report that the Rawlings government was plotting to eliminate political opponents and "trouble causers in the private press." The report stated: "We are told that some beautiful Libyan girls are . . . to join the plot, and they will be used to lure the editors, and administer some slow poison to the targeted group."[76]

Forum and *Wal Fadjri*, by contrast, are considerably more restrained in tone and in content. *Wal Fadjri* periodically reports about topics important to the underdog, but without strident or unabashed advocacy. In its economic coverage, for example, *Wal Fadjri* has described the ineffectiveness of government programs in stimulating job creation in Senegal, and reported how official statistics at best offer an incomplete picture of national unemployment.[77] *Forum*, by contrast, published no prominent reports that took up issues important to the underdog.

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[74] "London Police Investigating the Revenge of the Terminator: JJ Plots to Kill Asabre, Others in UK?" *Free Press* [Accra, Ghana], 2-8 August 1995, 1; "Preparing to Combat Expected Opposition: JJ Plans to Kill in U.S.?" *Free Press*, 11-17 October 1995, 1.

[75] "A Nest for Those Who Only Yesterday Identified Themselves with the Poor," *Free Press*, 16-22 June 1995, 1.

[76] "Ten Cows Buried for Rituals," *Ghanaian Voice*, 28-29 August 1995, 1.

[77] "On est loin de la réalité" [We are far from the reality], *Wal Fadjri* [Dakar, Senegal], 19 July 1995, 3.

Discussion and conclusions

Judging from the results of this study, it cannot be said that resurgent yellow journalism is afoot in West Africa. The newspapers examined do not consistently or uniformly exhibit the genre's classic characteristics. Some features of yellow journalism were unmistakably present in the Ghanaian newspapers, however. In particular, the *Free Press* and *Ghanaian Voice* regularly demonstrated tendencies to promote the interests of the underdog, to act as watchdog, and even to assume the role of political opposition.[78] By claiming an activist role, the Ghanaian press evokes a characteristic feature of the yellow press. As Arthur Brisbane, one of the genre's leading practitioners stated in 1900: "Yellow journalism is the journalism of action."[79]

Thinly documented and improbable reports -- another classic feature of yellow journalism -- appeared periodically in the Ghanaian newspapers, particularly in the *Free Press*. But the Ghanaian press, and certainly the French-language newspapers, failed to meet consistently most other defining characteristics of yellow journals, such as prominent use of photographs, publication of a supplement, and coverage of popular sports.

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[78] The notion the independent press could act as the political opposition to the Rawlings government emerged following the opposition parties' boycott of parliamentary elections in 1992. See, Kwasi Gyan-Apenteng, "Ghana: The press as opposition," *West Africa*, 25-31 January 1993, 100. See also, Sharfstein, 48.

[79] Arthur Brisbane, "The American Newspaper: Yellow Journalism," *The Bookman* (19), June 1904, 400. He also wrote, 404: "Yellow journalism is war, war on hypocrisy, war against class privilege." Brisbane was Hearst's close and long-serving lieutenant.

It is quite likely indeed that yellow journalism was a distinct typology, a peculiar and transient product of America's Gilded Age that lives only in epithet and misconception. The genre probably is incapable of being wholly replicated in the late twentieth century: Media systems and press cultures are too different and variable. The independent press in Africa confronts obstacles -- staggering illiteracy, profound poverty, preindustrial subsistence economies, meager advertising revenues, modest circulations, and regimes often intolerant of upstart newspapers -- far more profound and intractable than those encountered by the yellow press in the United States.

Whereas the yellow press became a mass medium and a immensely profitable business,[80] the independent newspapers in sub-Saharan Africa seldom have standing circulations of more than 10,000.[81] And whereas the yellow press in the United States was the target of surprisingly few repressive measures,[82] a sensational and activist press in Africa seems readily to invite crackdowns. The publisher and editor of the *Free Press* were arrested in February 1996 on charges of publishing "false reports likely to injure the reputation of the government".[83] Crackdowns may in fact be more likely in Africa against a press that exhibits some classic characteristics of yellow journalism, that is, if it is seen as sensational and reckless.

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[80] Mott, 546-7.

[81] Tudesq, 147-50. See also, Shamlal Puri, "Ghana: Fears for Future of Private Press," *IPI Report*, September 1994, 15.

[82] See Mott, 605-6. For discussion about why the yellow press was seldom sued for libel, see Alger, 148. Intrusiveness and other abuses of the yellow press prompted one British commentator to suggest curbs on press freedom in the United States. See Whibley, 243.

[83] "Three Ghana Journalists Remanded in Libel Suit," *Reuters*, 14 February 1996. Available on Nexis. The publisher and editor of the *Free Press* pleaded not guilty. Also arrested was the editor of another independent newspaper, the *Ghanaian Chronicle*. The newspapers published a report, first carried in the New York *African Observer*, that a Ghanaian diplomat had been arrested in Geneva on drug charges.

Authoritarian regimes in Africa are inclined to invoke the epithet "yellow journalism" to prepare for, or to justify, repressive measures against the press. A military regime in Nigeria, for example, warned upon taking power in 1985 that there would be "no license for recklessness or yellow journalism."[84] And the regime eventually cracked down on the country's aggressive independent press, jailing journalists and forcing others into hiding.[85]

Kenya's information minister in 1993 cautioned opposition news media against what he called "yellow journalism and gutter press."[86] His warning was a prelude to repressive measures that have included sending journalists for reports that insult the president, Daniel arap Moi.[87]

This study suggests, however, that "yellow journalism" cannot properly be applied to the independent press in West Africa. Such a finding is no doubt to be welcomed as reassuring; the beleaguered press in Africa needs no additional or self-inflicted burdens. Independent journalism in Africa is amply precarious without newspapers' indulging in outlandish practices such as inventing and willfully exaggerating news reports. Doing so not only would damage credibility and diminish authority. It would surely encourage repressive measures which, in any case, seem never to be very distant.

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[84] "Old Men Tremble," *The Economist*, 7 September 1985, 54.

[85] Karl Maier, "Babagangida forces Nigerian press underground," *The Independent* [London], 22 August 1993, 10. The succeeding military regime in Nigeria has been even more ruthless, closing leading independent newspapers and sending journalists to prison for prolonged terms. See, Buckley, "Nigeria's Military Rulers Cracking Down on the Press."

[86] "Kenyan information minister warns 'gutter press' against sedition," *British Broadcasting Corporation Summary of World Broadcasts*, 9 March 1993. Available on Nexis.

[87] Lasner, 45-6.

"SAME/DIFFERENCE: The Media, Equal Rights and Aboriginal Women in Canada, 1968."

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"SAME/DIFFERENCE: The Media, Equal Rights and Aboriginal Women in Canada, 1968."

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In 1968, the federal Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada held hearings across the country. In every city they visited, the commissioners made a point of emphasizing the sameness of the problems Canadian women were experiencing at the time, including unequal treatment in the workplace, unfair laws governing marriage and divorce and lack of daycare. The media, including the press and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, covered the hearings, relaying to their audiences the concerns of the commissioners and those people who presented briefs.

Although the Commission hearings were fora primarily for white, middle-class women, several aboriginal women presented their views on the issues that specifically involved them.

Using archival television footage, audio tape and press articles, this paper explores the boundaries between white and aboriginal women in Canada as the media, using various journalistic story-telling techniques, interpreted them.

In the "human rights" lexicon of the time, the media's overriding message was that there should be no boundaries between white and aboriginal as sameness meant equality for women everywhere in Canada. Yet, even then, there were media "leaks" in which individuals stressed the importance of respect for cultural differences. Taken together, the media coverage of aboriginal issues presented to the Royal Commission resulted in complex messages to Canadian audiences about the flexibility of the boundaries between aboriginal and white women, and among native women themselves.

"SAME/DIFFERENCE: The Media, Equal Rights and Aboriginal Women in Canada, 1968."

In 1968, the federal Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada held public hearings across the country. It had been established the year before after pressure was brought to bear on the minority Liberal government by an ad hoc committee of 32 groups representing mostly anglophone, white women. During the spring and fall of 1968, seven Commissioners, five women and two men, travelled across the country asking Canadians if the political, economic and legal status of women could be changed for the better. After several delays, the Commission brought down its Report, containing 167 recommendations, in December of 1970.[1]

While scholars have noted the important role the journalists and broadcasters played in the Commission's successful bid for public and political attention, they have not discussed it in any great detail.[2] The media, including the Canadian Press (CP) news agency and the country's public broadcaster, the CBC, covered the hearings regularly, relaying to their audiences the concerns of the people who presented briefs.

Using archival television footage, audio tape and press articles, this paper explores one aspect of the media's perception of "equality" and "status" in relation to native women in the south. It is part of a larger work in progress about the media coverage of various women's issues as they were presented to the Commission. Aside from newspaper and magazine clippings and radio and TV programs preserved on film and tape, other primary sources include the papers of the Commission and two of its members.[3]

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women is considered a milestone in the history of Canadian women, coming as it did when many women felt that changes in the law were long overdue. In the 1960's, as the economy continued to expand and many women became better educated, they found that the social mores of the post-war era, which valued middle-class domesticity, had fallen well behind their own experiences of what they could achieve, especially now that they could control the size of their families, using the birth control pill and other methods. Although more and more married women were either rejoining the workforce or had never left after the war, legally and socially, they were still devalued in relation to men in the eyes of the law and the state and this had a serious impact on their economic status and freedom.[4] The women, mostly white and middle-class, who appeared at the hearings complained that education for young women was predicated on the idea that they would become wives and mothers, equal pay and minimum wage laws were applied inadequately and unequally across the country, marital property was assumed to belong to the husband regardless of the labour the wife put into the household, abortion was illegal except to save the life of the mother, access to birth control information and devices was limited by law and the lack of childcare services was preventing mothers from earning needed income for their families.[5]

The women were pressing their cause during a period of political unrest and change. At the time, the struggles of various minority groups in the United States and Canada, including people of colour, Quebec separatists and the aboriginal peoples were competing for media attention with New Left campus politics, the peace movement, the "hippie" counterculture and the so-called "sexual revolution."[6] The fact that 1968 was the United Nations' International Year of Human Rights gave journalists a handy "hook" for just about any story that involved personal freedoms, and the Commission itself a liberal, humanist model of sexual equality within which to work.[7]

The Commissioners, who all were white and mostly professionals, explored one area with which they and most reporters were not familiar, the lives of aboriginal women on reserves and the streets of the cities. Several native women appeared at the hearings to plead for better living conditions on their reserves, help for their youngsters going to the cities, and a change in the federal law which at the time stripped First Nations women of their "Indian status" if they married white men. The chair of the Commission was Florence Bird, a distinguished journalist and broadcaster. The tall, white-haired Bird, then almost 60, had a confident bearing and well-modulated voice which revealed her upper-class Philadelphia origins and her Bryn Mawr schooling. At the time, she saw herself essentially as a humanist whose feminism was a natural expression of her liberal, democratic beliefs.[8] In the Commission's "human rights" lexicon, equality meant sameness in that each woman must be allowed her individual rights as a citizen, regardless of her racial origin.[9] The media often followed that line, yet, even so, there were "leaks" in which the importance of cultural differences were stressed. Taken together, the media coverage of aboriginal issues as they were presented to the Commission, while they sometimes exploited stereotypes, resulted in complex messages to Canadian audiences about the flexibility of the boundaries between aboriginal and white women, and among native women as well.

Several media scholars, although they take different approaches, attempt to connect news coverage about women with the social and cultural contexts in which it was produced. Journalists' real biases can be determined in many ways, through the discourse they use in headlines, leads and background information, as well as in analysis and commentary; the ways in which news is organized, controlled and presented, including the interplay between sources and journalists; and how newsworthiness is based on values imbedded in the overall culture, such as conflict, unusualness, timeliness, an emphasis on elites or hierarchies, a focus on "personalities" or people rather than institutions, and a story's relevance to editors, journalists and audiences.[10] In the view of cultural scholars Bird and Dardenne, news stories, like myths, "do not 'tell it like it is' but rather, 'tell it like it means.'" Any perceived deviance from cultural norms is perceived negatively.[11]

Similarly, gender and race are a socially constructed categories; in other words, regardless of obvious physical differences, the ways in which women, white and native, are perceived are products of the power relations in society, and, as such, are tied to specific historical and cultural contexts. How women of any race are expected to behave, or how much freedom they have, depends on time and place; yet, there is some continuity to these cultural expectations and similarities in how their defiance or acquiesence is regarded.[12]

As a recent study by Marlene Brant Castellano and Janice Hill on native women in Ontario points out, media images have relayed aboriginal identity as "a single category of people on the margins of Canadian society." Their study is one of newest of the few historical secondary sources which includes information on the lives of aboriginal women in the 1960s in Canada. Much of this new work is presented in the oral history tradition.[13] Studies of native women in the news are even more scarce, but there is one that suggests that Canadian journalists' tendency to invoke an "Indian Princess" motif and her negative foils have not entirely disappeared in recent years.[14]

At the time of the Commission hearings, native peoples were gathering strength to counter the federal model of assimilation.

Castellano and Brant tell us that, from an aboriginal perspective, "the understanding of nationhood is rooted in a spiritual world view that recognizes a unique bond between the land as the source of sustenance and the people whose responsibility it is to take care of the land." This is seen as a covenant with the Creator. But years of colonial and church rule, which took their land and tried to separate the people from their spiritual beliefs and heritage, constituted a serious assault on their culture and heritage.[15]

During the 1960's, the federal government continued to cling to its acculturation model as desirable for the aboriginal people, that is, it assumed that improved living standards and an adequate education were the tools that would help them both survive and achieve equality with other Canadians. From this white perspective, all "Indians," "Eskimos" and Metis[16] naturally aspired to the same housing, education, work opportunities, and medical services as other Canadians. aboriginal children who came under federal jurisdiction were given a "white" education in schools on the reserves or in their villages, or were sent to white-run residential schools away from their families. This education not only caused wrenching alienation between the generations, it did not prepare the girls to take on jobs any more financially rewarding than a nurse's aide, hairdresser or domestic worker. Since there was little work for them on native reserves or territory, they went to the cities, which many experienced as alien and frightening.[17]

The media responded with stories, some of them quite sympathetic, peppered with statistics about the conditions under which native people lived. In November of 1968, for example, journalist Barbara Frum wrote a feature that was very critical of the federal government's "custodial" attitude and underlined the native leaders' belief that they would never be equal until they could control their own destinies. This and other articles pointed out that "federal spending on Indians was less than half spent on other Canadians" and that many others who fell outside of federal jurisdiction had little support at all. They also chronicled the living conditions on the reserves and blamed crowded homes, less than ten per cent of which had plumbing, for the high incidents of disease and death. While the birth rate was twice as high as that for whites, increasing by four percent versus two percent a year, the maternal mortality rate was roughly five times higher. Generally, white women outlived native women by a decade, 76 to 66 years. Very few of the people lived above the poverty line, the unemployment rate was ten times the national average, and the high school dropout rate was ninety percent.[18]

The aboriginal people formed provincial, regional and national associations, such as the National Indian Brotherhood, the better to bargain with the federal government over conditions on the reserves, treaty rights, land claims and the changes they wanted to the Indian Act of 1951 which was just being revised. The Act gave the federal government control over reserve land, money, system of government and even who was legally designated an "Indian." The government resisted giving these groups political power, arguing that the aboriginal people did not speak with one voice and were divided among themselves. native critics of the federal government said it still behaved as a colonizer, giving lip service to collaboration with the aboriginal people but not really listening to them. aboriginal organizers and writers were also very much concerned with "Indian" identity, and were resisting any attempts at cultural assimilation, which they saw as a by-product of the ideal of "equality" within the "Just Society" philosophy of the new Liberal Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau. They insisted that they deserved "Citizen Plus" status, in other words, their legal status under the Indian Act should be retained and, in addition, their "special history, rights and circumstances" should be recognized.[19]

First Nations and Metis women, who were forming their own associations at the same time, asked for equality within the broader legal system as did white women. But, from their perspective, decent housing, education that would not rob their children of their languages and cultures, and, for some on reserves, equal status with First Nations men, took priority. The issue of "status" was a difficult one. The women who married white men did not want to lose their rights as status Indians; others who did not present briefs to the Commission disagreed, arguing that a change in the law would only serve to speed assimilation.[20]

Journalists framed most of their stories according to the conflict model, often between white bureaucracy and native reality, native women and men, and "modern" and traditional ways. Accounts of aboriginal "new women" who were becoming better educated than their mothers overlapped with dramatic portrayals of native women activists and less-flattering stereotypes of those who deviated from so-called "white" moral and family values. Several stories focused on their common-law marriages, high "illegitimacy" rate and the addiction, sexual exploitation and imprisonment of "tragic" and "destitute" aboriginal women on urban "skid rows."

The journalists also allowed well-meaning white authorities to provide "expertise" about the lives of native women, to claim that they wanted the same things other Canadian women wanted. This approach invoked the "proximity" model of newsworthiness in the sense that it could be said that women of vastly different cultures had concerns in common which fell in nicely with the Commission's "human rights" mandate. aboriginal voices demanding agency over their own social welfare, health and education filtered through, however, along with similar supportive comments from sympathetic whites, including journalists, lending a more nuanced message to the one which equated human rights with sameness.

The word "racism" did not appear in any of the media coverage considered here, which suggests that it was not used then as commonly as it is now, but some stories and commentaries linked the struggles of Canada's aboriginal peoples with those of Black people in the United States and Canada; denial of their dreams for their human rights could result in violence at worst and at the very least was unfair. This concern was expressed by one, apparently sympathetic white man, Jack Thorpe, who, with his wife, fostered several teenage Metis girls in Edmonton, Alberta. Thorpe, a businessman, told the Commission hearing in Edmonton that he had interviewed over 70 Metis and "Indian" women living on "skid row." The federal government, he was quoted as saying, did not "'give a damn'" about the Metis, who did not even have the admittedly inadequate protection that "treaty Indians" did. Drawing a parallel with the recent riots involving Black people in the United States, he predicted "violence" if something was not done. Rosemary Speirs of Canadian Press, who travelled across the country with the Commission, quoted him:

> "Metis and Indian men are not going to stand by much longer and watch their women become the scum of white society....If we do nothing, in ten years we will have problems that will make the Watts and Detroit riots look like small stuff."

The story ran in several newspapers with startling headlines which detracted attention from the point of his brief, the problems facing these women: "Violence forecast at hearings: Metis problems serious, says Edmonton manager," in the Regina Leader-Post; "'Metis will explode,' -- They can't take much more degredation (sic)", in the Calgary Albertan and "Help Metis now or face a Watts riot in 10 years, he warns," in the Toronto Daily Star.[21]

CP ran a related story about "Mary," a woman Thorpe interviewed, using his tape recording as a reference. She had run away from her home in Lac la Biche, Alberta to find a new start in Edmonton after she and her mother became pregnant by the same man. She wanted to be with her own people in the city and wound up on "skid row", where she lived with a procession of men who often beat her. The story reinforced the image of the Metis woman as a tragic figure, or, in the words of the headline in the Fredericton Gleaner, "Commission Hears Tragic Story Of Destitute Metis Women."

Thorpe also claimed that 75 per cent of the women in the Fort Saskatchewan jail, where prisoners from Alberta were sent, were aboriginal or Metis, a claim later confirmed in a brief to the Commission from the Saskatchewan government which also said most of them were there because they could not pay liquor fines.[22] At the time, the federal government kept few statistics distinguishing white from native inmates, but police often arrested aboriginal people of both sexes if they were drunk.[23] They could also pick up any young woman they suspected of being a prostitute on a charge of "vagrancy," even if she was just walking down the street. When the women couldn't pay their fines, they were jailed.[24] The media exposure of this situation led an editorial writer on the Red Deer Advocate of Alberta to exclaim, under the heading, "Our Colored Problem:

> It is hard to imagine a more damning indictment of Canadian Indian and Metis policy, white society's values or the judicial process...and this in a country which pretends to be horrified by other countries' treatment of colored people."[25]

This kind of coverage, although sympathetic, tended to reinforce the stereotype of the aboriginal woman as a hopeless drunk with loose morals. In their coverage, neither Ed Reid of the CBC, who regularly reported the hearings for "Matinee" on radio and "Take 30" on TV, nor the local newspaper apparently made any reference to Thorpe's predictions of violence, but concentrated on the plight of the women as he had described it.[26]

The media image of the native woman as a tragic victim overlapped with more admiring accounts of young women who were trying to make something of themselves, and of women of all ages who were fighting for better housing, education and health standards on the reserves. These women complained to the Commission about their living standards, but there were mixed messages about their abilities to survive without compromising their chastity. In Edmonton, Emily Yellowknee, then 19, appeared on behalf of her mother, Clara Yellowknee, who was secretary of the local Metis-Indian association on the five Wabasca Reserves about 250 miles northeast of Edmonton. Through her daughter, the elder Yellowknee said that local women were dying of poverty and asked for training for "native girls" so that they could becomes cooks, nurses or teachers on the reserves, rather than quit school and live common-law. "'How can girls raised in such conditions become respected Canadian mothers of tomorrow?'"[27]

At the hearings, the media spotlight turned on Emily, who was the eldest of twelve children and in Grade 12 in a school in Edmonton. She wanted to get a degree so that she could teach, which the media represented as evidence that the key to solving the problems on the reserves was education. In fact, many native women sought a balance which would help their children cope in a white world but still impress upon them the values of their native elders and spiritual leaders.[28] Emily presented a success-story foil to her former Grade eight classmates on the reserves. The following exchange among Emily, Florence Bird and an unidentified white man, brought this out on CBC TV's "Take 30" in a later program. Emily, filmed in close-up, told them that she wanted to complete university and go back to the reserves to teach.

> Bird: What do you think your friends feel about this? Do they have that kind of dream or hope?
> Emily: Not the friends from back home, I don't think.
> Bird: What do they dream about?
> Emily: I don't know.
> Unidentified man: I think if you want to get some light here you ask Emily about the girls who were with her in grade eight.
> Bird: What happened to them? Please tell us.
> Emily: I'm the only one that doesn't have a baby. They've been shacking up, all my classmates from grade eight.
> Bird: Shacking up...with any old person?
> Emily: Mm-hmn.
> Bird: Any time?
> Emily: Yes.
> Bird: I understand.[29]

Of the newspapers, only the local Journal gave Emily the space to explain their circumstances: they dropped out of school because there were no jobs for them to go to, they had to take care of younger children in the family, or because they didn't want to be sent away to a residential high school. Even so, the headline implied that they were on a one-way street to an immoral lifestyle: "1-Way Street Leads To Common Law."[30]

When more mature women appeared at the hearing, they adopted the "human rights" rhetoric to which sympathetic white feminists could relate while at the same time underlining their own, specific needs as native people. It appears to have been a deliberate strategy on their part. A month before the Commission began its hearings, there had been a gathering of over three hundred women at the Alberta native Women's conference in Edmonton. Mary Ann Lavallee, a Cree from the Cowessess Reserve, 90 miles east of Regina, Saskatchewan, helped lead a protest march to the Alberta legislature when the women heard that the federal government might cut off health care funds to treaty Indians. They wanted the province to intervene. At the conference, she urged the gathering to find out how the Royal Commission would affect them "'in regard to equal job opportunities, equal pay for equal work, divorce and abortion laws.'" That list would have sounded familiar to white feminists and the reporters covering the Commission hearings, but then Lavallee went on to list the specific problems that she felt the aboriginal women could help solve: school dropouts, alcohol abuse and the native infant mortality rate.[31] Alice Steinhauer, who had chaired the conference, another Cree, June Stifle, and a Metis, Christine Daniels, took these ideas to the Commission when it sat in Edmonton the following month. Their brief, Wayne Erickson of CBC News reported, would deal with health care, education and housing, rather than issues white women were concerned with such as equal pay and daycare. Steinhauer told him that native women were not very familiar with the Commission, although some of them had been involved with white women's organizations. She told him: "I don't think the native women are ready for this type of advancement or whatever you call it." Erickson ended his report by saying rather condescendingly that although the Commission was a "mystery" to the aboriginal women, Steinhauer felt they could bring their problems there. They would accomplish nothing, she said, by being silent.[32]

Steinhauer and her two companions made it clear to the Commissioners that the women were tired of federal interference in their lives, a message that came through in the media coverage. They no longer wanted to see their families torn apart when their children were sent to residential schools away from their reserves and villages which stripped them of their language and heritage. The three women also asked for better living conditions on the reserves, blaming the contaminated water there on "white men," but they also made it clear that aboriginal and Metis women were working together to find solutions to their problems. Steinhauer was quoted as saying, "'No one else can do that for us, nor do we want them to.'" In a local version of the story, June Stifle asked for half-way houses for aboriginal women coming to the city, but specified that they should be run by "'Indian counsellors... Otherwise it will be just another do-good program.'" Clearly, the aboriginal spokeswomen were demanding agency over their lives, and the media coverage was beginning to reflect that point of view.[33]

Ed Reid of the CBC apparently did not cover their brief, but he paid a great deal of attention to Mary Ann Lavallee, who really seemed to surprise and impress him when she appeared before the Commission in Regina, Saskatchewan. Reid, who liked to personalize the issues by focusing on the stories of specific women, described her to his audience as "the short Indian woman in a simple, purple dress." Florence Bird, clearly expecting Lavallee to be hesitant and shy, tried to reassure her: "So could you just try to tell us very simply, and we will listen with the greatest interest." But Lavallee stunned the reporters and won their sympathy with a hand-written, last-minute submission, which Reid called "the most eloquent brief of the week." Her "very moving" and "fighting" presentation, he said, had many women in the hearing audience in tears.[34]

Lavallee's speech embodied some of the human rights rhetoric that would have been familiar to the white women there, even though she was speaking in a specifically aboriginal context. Her opening remarks, which Reid used on "Matinee," captured that spirit.

> Ladies and gentlemen, what I will say concerns the people of the reserves but particularly the Indian women. As Canada lit a flame to light the way to her centennial year, may this brief presented to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women light a flame for native women, to light the way for her emancipation, her recognition and acceptance as an individual on her own merit. As an ally and partner for the struggle for the human rights for the Indian and Eskimo and Metis. [Pause] And last but not least it is secretly hoped that this brief and the moral support it can earn will help open the way for Indian man, to give to Indian woman the dignity and respect and recognition which is hers by virtue of birth, by virtue of being wife and mother, and individual, and by virtue of 20th century standards.[35]

The local press appears to have distorted her message, however. Ruth Willson of the Leader-Post saw her brief mainly as a plea "for status for Indian men," and, in one version, contrasted this approach to white women's demands for equality with men. But Willson's story also paraphrased Lavallee as saying that Indian women wanted respect from their male partners. Lavallee saw the problem as one of economics; the Indian Act "emasculated" the men of the reserves and overprotected them to the point where they could not provide for their families themselves. This system had led to "'favoritism, apathy, alcoholism and local political patronage.'" The women, she said, had been silent for too long; it was time for them to act.[36]

Rhetorically, one of the strongest comments Lavallee made was: "It is a well-established fact that the Indian woman has been the workhorse, the doormat and the baby machine." On "Take 30," Reid started his segment of Lavallee with a medium-shot of her reading these same words from her brief, while some newspaper editors picked up on her "doormat" comment in the CP version and put it in the headlines; for example, the story appeared as "Indian women just doormats status commissioners told," in the Toronto Star and "Society uses Indian women as doormats, commission on women's status is told," in The Globe and Mail. In her story, Speirs of CP focused on the women's lives on the reserves and quoted Lavallee's contention that they were expected to "'blend with the scenery.'"[37]

Her strong sentiments and the way the media highlighted them served again to underline a stereotype of the native women as inadequate, a risk which Lavallee acknowledged. Speirs of CP quoted her as saying: "'But for Indian women my description of them as subordinated in an extreme way, carries an extra sting and a deeper hurt than is apparent.'"[38] In an interview with Reid, after her presentation, Lavallee added, more colloquially, "I don't know why it is that before Indian people are noticed, before anybody pays attention to what they say, they have to... expose their dirty laundry."

In the same interview, Reid asked her about her dreams, a question he put in the context of the Martin Luther King's dream for the Black people of the United States. The "Take 30" version of her reply assumed the context of the substandard living conditions on the reserves and suggested that Lavallee aspired to the values of the white, middle-class housewife. "Sometimes I dream that I could own a beautiful house and it has red brick tiles on all the floors and there's elegant furniture, and that we could live graciously, and that I could be the lady of the house."

The longer "Matinee" version casts a more complex light. After "lady of the house", she added: " ...author, Nobel Prize winner [she laughed]. I'd like to win a Nobel Prize some day."[39] In this rendering, Lavallee did not fit any handy media stereotype of the aboriginal woman and, in fact, aspired to the same accomplishments, if not more so, as most white women did. She was not a tragic figure and certainly no doormat. Reid made a point of saying that she was the mother of five well-educated children, one of whom had won a scholarship to medical school, but he and the other reporters at the hearings did not mention that she was writing two books at the time and completely missed the fact that she was already known as an activist among the aboriginal women of the Prairies. For her part, she told Reid that native women had taken note of the publicity white women were getting for their demands. "Well, we see through the TV and the radio and all the news media where certain women are doing this, and women are doing this across the country, you know, so we wanted in on it, too."[40]

Lavallee and the other women from the Alberta native conference were not the only women with fighting spirit to appear before the Commission, even though it put them at risk. In Ottawa, six months later, three women from the Kanewake reserve (then known as Caughnawaga) outside of Montreal led a delegation of 30 Mohawk women to the hearings. They came to complain about the section of the Indian Act which stripped them and their children of their treaty status if they married white men. The Act, in line with other white legislation, assumed that a woman would take the nationality of her husband but it also gave band councils the right to pass laws which further separated these aboriginal women and their children from their communities. White women who married First Nations men attained Indian status.[41]

The media reported that aboriginal wives or widows of white men had no voting, property or burial rights on the reserves and were often threatened with eviction, even from property they had inherited. The children could not go to school on the reserve, or even swim in the pool there with their friends who had aboriginal fathers.[42] There is no CBC record of this brief, but the print reporters took essentially the same angle to the story: the women were in conflict with their band councils as much as with the federal bureaucracy and were demanding the same rights for themselves and their children as First Nations men who had white wives.

The women, Mary Two Axe Earley, Betty Deer Brisebois, Cecilia Ouimette and Charlene Bourque, who was just 15, made it clear that they were risking eviction from the reserve by complaining. As Wendy Dey of the Ottawa Citizen put it in her lead: "Thirty Mohawk women are afraid they'll be 'kicked off' their reserve for bringing their beefs to the Royal Commission..." The Toronto Star led with a similar angle, noting that the native women had asked two prominent white women, Grace MacInnis of the New Democratic Party, then the only woman in the House of Commons, and Therese Casgrain, a leader of the Quebec Federation of Women, to sit with them. From the media accounts, they were reaching out to white women for moral support.[43]

The "pretty" and "attractive" Bourque, the daughter of a Mohawk mother and francophone father, also caught the eye of the reporters, who framed her as a youthful advocate of aboriginal pride. Although the journalists stopped short of describing her as an "Indian Princess," Dey of the Citizen mentioned that she was wearing a headband and CP noted that the women who accompanied her and her companions were "sporting headbands and feathers." Dey said Bourque made a "passionate plea"[44] to the Commission, which the Toronto Star quoted at length:

> "I look like an Indian. I feel like an Indian. I want to be an Indian but this law says no... I want my rights -- I want my heritage. I am very proud that I am an Indian and that is what I am in my heart."

The Star headlined the story, "Indian women want to be Indians," which could have either been a simplistic play on words, or an acknowledgement of the native demand for special recognition as well as their rights under the Indian Act.[45] The Montreal Star's headline, on the other hand, appeared to question their contention that they were discriminated against: "'Discrimination'" in Indian Act aired by women."[46]

The coverage and commentary of the Mohawk women's brief, taken as a whole, reveals both journalists' sympathy with their demands for "equality" and consciousness of their differences, especially in appearance. The references to headbands and feathers were included, presumably, to add "colour" to the story, and underline the idea that while these women, too, wanted "marital status," they were exotically different from the white women in the room. Those descriptions could also be read, however, as an acknowledgement of their insistence on their Indian identity.

The reporters' efforts to emphasize the very real fears the Mohawk women had about being ejected from their homes for complaining to the Commission while well-intentioned, inevitably set up a conflict model which centred on the women versus the men. The Standard-Freeholder in Cornwall, Ontario, for example, did a follow-up story, using the "proximity" model of reportage to localize it. The rather limp lead read, "Indians from the St. Regis Band are not getting themselves involved in the fight being put up by 30 Mohawk women of the Caughnawaga Band outside Montreal." The band administrator at St. Regis (now Akwesasne), said it was a national matter and would not comment, but the federal agent, Ralph Whitebean, did so. He was quoted as justifying the Indian Act by saying that as far as an aboriginal woman's status was concerned: "'It goes back to Bible times and the story of Ruth wherein the woman took the nationality of her husband's people.'"[47] The conflict approach underscored the idea, as the Sudbury Star editorialized, somewhat snarkily, that "that discrimination is not entirely a white man's failing."[48]

In reality, both the band councils and the federal government were working together at that point to resist any changes in the Indian Act which would have given the women back their status.[49] After the hearing in Ottawa, Earley wrote to the Commission, saying that the women had been harassed on their return home and that Bourque had been given such a hard time by other young people, some of them "whiter" than she was, that the women arranged for her to leave the reserve for awhile.[50]

Between the time the Commission hearings ended that week, and its Report was released two years later, native women continued their different battles for recognition and equality. The women of Kanewake who wanted to keep their Indian status formed an organization called "Equal Rights for Indian Women" and appealed through the media for support from other native women across the country. They met twice with the Minister of Indian Affairs and brought their issues to native conferences. Harassment continued, apparently from white women who had married aboriginal men as much as from anyone, and they cautiously asked the media not to used their names.[51]

For all their sympathy during the hearings, and their attention to native rights issues afterwards, the media did not discuss the few proposals concerning aboriginal women in the Commission's Report to any extent. But Margaret Weiers of the Toronto Daily Star, in her assessment that the recommendations in general were "too little, too late," suggested that the setting up of native friendship centres in the cities was hardly enough to help aboriginal women cope with poverty.[52]

The print and broadcast coverage of the hearings of the Royal Commission were brief media flashes in the overall history of women's issues in Canada. Public hearings are one-day events, hit-and-run exercises for busy journalists who must sort through a dozen briefs a day and decide which one would most interest their audiences. Because of that, and because the story of the country's aboriginal women is still largely untold outside of native circles, the events discussed in this paper represent only a fragment of the picture.

Any conclusions must be tentative at this stage, but the media coverage of the Commission hearings does suggest that historians and other scholars must go far beyond examining simplistic Princess/squaw images of aboriginal women in order to understand how they are treated in the media and what it means. In this case, there appears to have been a complex interaction between native women's needs and the media's interpretation of them, however flawed. The discourse used, that is, what the aboriginal women said, and what the media said they said, is important, especially when the women concerned used a language of equality that white women understood. Did it mean that the native women really aspired to white ways or were they misinterpreted?

As Mary Anne Lavallee and the women from Kanewake knew, courting the mainstream media could have repercussions. With the best of intentions and all the sympathy in the world, the reporters could confuse their issues with those of other minorities, such as Black people in the United States. Or they could take white authorities like Jack Thorpe at their word. Or frame native women as "doormats" and "tragic figures" disenfranchised from their native heritage, adding to the sense of betrayal in aboriginal communities. For every educated "Emily" striving to do the best for her people, it seemed that there was a destitute "Mary" waiting in the media wings, vying for white sympathy and attention. While the journalists' interpretations had some basis in reality, the emphasis on conflict and violence, tragedy and redemption, meant that one woman, or a few, became symbols for many and the real issues were lost.

NOTES

1. Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970.)

2. For a brief account of these events, see Monique Begin, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada: Twenty Years Later," in Constance Backhouse and David H. Flaherty, (eds.), Challenging Times: The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 21-38. One Ph.D. thesis includes some discussion of the media, but the samples and analysis are limited. Cerise Morris, "No More Than Simple Justice: The Royal Commission on the Status of Women and Social Change in Canada," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec, 1982.

3. Two of the seven Commissioners made a separate trip to Whitehorse in the Yukon, and Yellowknife and several villages in the Northwest Territories, which will be discussed in my overall study. There are over 1500 newspaper and magazine stories in the Commission papers and others on microfilm. NAC RCSW Vols. 40-45. Other primary sources include NAC Florence Bayard Bird Papers, MG 31 D 63, NAC Elsie Gregory MacGill Papers, MG 31 K7 and NAC MG 28 I 232, Papers of the Media Club of Canada (formerly the Canadian Women's Press Club.) The broadcast media records include two national programs with a primarily female audience, "CBC Matinee" on radio and "Take 30," on TV. Most of the "Matinee" and "Take 30" programs on the Royal Commission have been preserved. See National Archives of Canada, Film and Sound Division, CBC Collection, "Take 30"; and CBC Radio Archives, Toronto, "CBC Matinee." The TV news record is spotty, but there are several radio news reports about the Commission in the CBC Radio Archives in Toronto, filed under CBC Radio News or Radio Direct Reports for the dates in question. Private broadcasters appear to have preserved relatively little material at all. In addition, I have conducted interviews with about 30 people who either worked on the Commission or who covered it as journalists and broadcasters.

4. Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson and Naomi Black, Canadian Women: A History, Second Edition, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Canada), 1996, Chapters 12-14. Jill Vickers, "The Intellectual Origins of the Women's Movement in Canada," in Backhouse and Flaherty, Challenging Times; Sandra Burt, "Changing Patterns in Public Policy," Beverley Baines, "Law, Gender, Equality," and Naomi Black, "The Canadian Women's Movement: The Second Wave," in Sandra Burt, Lorraine Code and Lindsay Dorney, (eds.), Changing Patterns, Second Edition, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, Inc., 1993); Jane Ursel, Private Lives, Public Policy: 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family, Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), Period III, 1940-1968.

5. The briefs are in National Archives of Canada, Papers of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (hereafter NAC RCSW) RG 33/89, on microfilms C-4878 to C-4883 and C-6798 to C-6803.

6. For an overview of Canadian politics and society at the time, see Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English, Canada Since 1945, 2nd Edition, Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1989, Part 5. For a contemporary media account, see, Elizabeth Dingman, "The Sixties: A decade of protest," The Telegram, Toronto, December 30, 1969.

7. Report of the Royal Commission, "Criteria and Principles," xi-xii. On the RCSW's analysis and approach, see Jane Arscott, "Twenty-Five Years and Sixty-Five Minutes After the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," International Journal of Canadian Studies, 11, Spring 1995, 33-56.

8. Her professional name was Anne Francis. Marilyn Argue, (Canadian Press, hereafter referred to as CP), "Inquiry Head Anne Francis Never Met Discrimination," Winnipeg Free Press, February 3, 1967, 22. Florence Bird interviewed by Peter Stursberg, National Archives of Canada, Moving Picture and Sound Division, IDCISN #163396, June 23, 1976. See also Bird, Anne Frances: An Autobiography, Toronto and Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin and Company Limited, 1974, 263-318; NAC Florence Bayard Bird Papers.

9. Arscott, 44-45. In the Report (1970) for example, there was no separate section for Aboriginal women. Their concerns were integrated with those of other women. See Report, chapter on education, 210-215; on marital status, 237-238; and on poverty, 328-331.

10. In his examination of news as discourse, van Dijk lists them as novelty, recency, presupposition, consonance, relevance, deviance and negativity, and proximity. Teun A.van Dijk, News As Discourse, (Hilldale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1988), 119-124; Michael Schudson, "The Sociology of News Production Revisited," in James Curran and Michael Gurevitch, (eds.), Mass Media and Society, London: Edward Arnold 1991, 141-159: Liesbet van Zoonen, "Feminist Perspectives on the Media," in Curran and Gurevitch, 33-54; Richard Ericson, Patrician Baranek, and Janet Chan, "Representing Order," in Helen Holmes and David Taras, (eds.), Seeing Ourselves: Media Power and Policy in Canada, First Edition, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada, 1992, 232-249; Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge, "Structuring and Selecting News," in S. Cohen, and J. Young (eds.), The Manufacture of News: Social Problems, Deviance and the Mass Media, (London: Constable 1981); Leon V. Sigal, "Sources Make the News," in Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson, (eds.), Reading the News, (New York: Pantheon, 1986); Herbert J. Gans, Deciding What's News, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Mark Fishman, Manufacturing the News, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980); Todd Gitlin, The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making

and Unmaking of the New Left, (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 1980).

11. S. Elizabeth Bird and Robert W. Dardenne, "Myth, Chronicle and Story. Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News," in James W. Carey, (ed.), Media, Myths and Narratives. Television and the Press, Sage Annual Reviews of Communication Research, Vol. 15. (Newbury Park: Sage, 1988), 69, 71-72.

12. On this method of analysis as applied to the history of women, see Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History, (New York: Columbia University Press 1988); see also van Zoonen, 44-45. Ruth Roach Pierson discusses the problems of defining cultural differences in "Experience, Difference, Dominance and Voice in the Writing of Canadian Women's History, " in Karen Offen, Ruth Roach Pierson and Jane Rendall, eds. Writing Women's History: International Perspectives, (London: Macmillan Co., 1991, 1-27.)

13. Michelle Brant Castellano and Janice Hill, "First Nations Women: Reclaiming Our Responsibilities," in Joy Parr, (ed.), A Diversity of Women: Ontario 1945-1980, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995). See also, Miriam McNab, "From the Bush to the Village to the City: Pinehouse Lake Aboriginal Women Adapt to Change," in David DeBrou and Aileen Moffatt, (eds.), "Other" Voices: Historical Essays on Saskatchewan Women, Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, 1995. On women in the north, see Julie Cruikshank, Life Lived Like A Story: Life Stories of Three Native Yukon Elders, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990) and Mary Crnkovich, (ed.), "Gossip": A Spoken History of Women in the North, (Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, 1990).

14. See Debbie Wise Haryris, "Colonizing Mohawk Women: Representations of Women in Mainstream Media," in Resources for Feminist Research, Vol. 20, 1 &2 (1991), 15-20. During Canada's centennial, the Native Council of Canada held "Indian Princess" pageants at Expo '67 in Montreal, which suggests that some Aboriginals had internalized this image. Palmer, 177.

15.Castellano and Hill, "First Nations Women," 232.

16. The old terms for Native people are used here in historical context, that is, as they were described in the mainstream media at the time. Today, the nomenclature has changed. First Nations refers mainly to those bands who have treaty or registered status with the federal government. The Metis have mixed "Indian" and white heritage, and may or may not be registered, while Inuit has generally replaced the disparaging term, "Eskimo." In Canada, all these peoples, and those who do not fall neatly into any of these categories, refer to themselves generally as Aboriginal people and sometimes as "Native." See McNab, "From the Bush to the Village to the City," 131, fn 3; for scholarly alternatives used mainly in

the U.S., see Olive Patricia Dickason, Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992, 15-17.

17. Castellano and Hill, "First Nations Women, 232-233. For a first hand account of the alienation experienced by a Metis woman, see Maria Campbell, Halfbreed, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973).

18. Barbara Frum, "Canadian Indians 1968: How Ottawa (And We) Slept," Chatelaine magazine, November 1968, 48-55, 109-111; Marvin D. Lipton, "Current Events," The Leader-Post, Regina, Saskatchewa, May 2, 1968, 20. Similar statistics also appeared in The Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970), 329-331. At the time, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics did not keep population records for registered Indians and Inuit.

19. J.R. Miller, Skyscrapers Hid the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada, Revised edition, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 211-235; E. Palmer Patterson II, The Canadian Indian: A History Since 1500, (Toronto: Collier Macmillan Canada, 1972), 176-191; Dickason, 328-339, 352-365, 380-411. Kathleen Jamieson, Indian Women and the Law in Canada: Citizens Minus, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1978), 75-81. For the view of a native man, see Harold Cardinal, The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians, (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1969).

20. Jeannette Corbiere Lavell and Yvonne Bedard eventually went to court over the issue in 1971. See Lavell's story in Castellano and Hill, "First Nations Women." The law was changed, after a long struggle, in 1985. See Sally Weaver, "First Nations Women and Government Policy, 1970-92: Discrimination and Conflict," in Burt, Code and Dorney, Changing Patterns, 92-150.

21. CP, "Violence among Metis feared," The Ottawa Citizen, April 26, 1968, 40; Rosemary Speirs, "Violence forecast at hearings: Metis problems serious, says Edmonton manager," in The Leader-Post, Regina, April 27, 1968; CP, "'Metis will explode,' -- They can't take much more degredation (sic)", The Albertan, Calgary, April 27, 1968, 7; CP, "Help Metis now or face a Watts riot in 10 years, he warns," Toronto Daily Star April 27, 1968.

22."Commission Hears Tragic Story Of Destitute Metis Women," The Gleaner, Fredericton, New Brunswick, April 27, 1968, 2; "Recorded in brief: Metis girl's life," The Montreal Star, April 29, 1968, 12; the same information was included in an overview story of the day's hearings, Ruth Willson, "Day care centre: Sask. would share program," The Leader Post, Regina, Sask., May 1, 1968, 22.

23.This harsher treatment had been written into the Indian Act and was commonly applied against non-status Natives as well. Jamieson, Indian Women and the Law in Canada, 80.

24. See CP, "But treatment needed: Offenders jailed," The Montreal Star, May 4, 1968; (no byline), "Status of women enquiry begins session in Saskatoon," Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, May 2, 1968, 12; Michele Veilleux, "Status Commission Asked To Aid Women In Jail," Winnipeg Free Press, June 1, 1968, 21; Rosemary Speirs, "Says former inmate: Jails promote more troubles," The Montreal Star, June 3, 1968, 12 and (no byline), "Jail breeds crime, ex-inmate claims," The Tribune, Winnipeg, June 1, 1968, 13. The CBC apparently did not report on these briefs but it and the press covered several other hearings where the problems with the laws were aired, although they did not focus on Native women specifically. CP, "Branding prostitutes criticized," The Ottawa Citizen, May 31, 1968, 33; Margaret Weiers, "Status probers told of discrimination," Toronto Daily Star, June 6, 1968, 78; Yvonne Crittenden, "The female offender's plight," The Telegram, Toronto, Oct. 2, 1968, 65; Rosemary Speirs, "Are Our Courts Pushing Youngsters?" Nelson Daily News, B.C., Oct. 3, 1968; CBC Radio News, Tapes #681001-0(1) and "681002(1) on "681002-4, Oct. 1 and 2, 1968, Gail Scott reporting for "The World At Six."

25. Editorial, "Our Colored Problem," Red Deer Advocate, Alberta, April 29, 1968, 4.

26."CBC Matinee," Tape #680426-7 on #681216-3, RCSW hearings from Edmonton and Calgary, April 26, 1968. The only surviving TV clip of Thorpe shows him telling the Commissioners that the federal government didn't "give a damn" about the Metis, and that the women were the worst off. It was shown during a retrospective sequence about the hearings two years later. "Take 30," ISN# 99083 1970-12-08, (Dec. 8, 1970), RCSW recommendations. See also "First-Hand Probe Urged For Metis," The Edmonton Journal, April 27, 1968, 21.

27. "1-Way Street Leads To Common Law," The Edmonton Journal, April 27, 1968, 21.

28.See the first person accounts of four Aboriginal women in Castellano and Hill, "First Nations Women."

29."Take 30," (Dec. 8, 1970). The man was likely Floyd Griesbach, a provincial development officer at Wabasca, who said girls like Emily represented a "brain drain" from there. CP, "Metis Seeking Home Schools," The Calgary Herald, April 27, 1968, 32.

30. Her brief was apparently not covered on "CBC Matinee." No byline, "1-Way Street Leads To Common Law," The Edmonton Journal, April 27, 1968, 21. See also, AP(CP), "Women ask for schools on reserves to protect language, customs," The Globe and Mail, April

27, 1968; CP, "Metis Seeking Home Schools," The Calgary Herald, April 27, 1968, 32.

31. CP, "Indian women silent too long -- speaker," Regina Leader-Post, March 16, 1968 and CP, "Indian women send second telegram to PM," Regina Leader-Post, March 18, 1968. Lavallee addressed white women's and public service groups as well. "Lack of Indian health care laid to 'yards of red tape,'" Regina Leader-Post, April 18, 1968, 3; CP, "Indians suffer from callous indifference of white man," The Montreal Star, April 29, 1968, 13.

32. Direct Reports, CBC Radio News, Tape #680422-0(2) April 22, 1968, Wayne Erickson reporting for "Canadian Roundup."

33. AP(CP), "Women ask for schools on reserves to protect language, customs," The Globe and Mail, April 27, 1968; CP, "Metis Seeking Home Schools," The Herald, Calgary, April 27, 1968, 32; (no byline), "1-Way Street Leads To Common Law," The Journal, Edmonton, April 27, 1968, 21. One CP stories drew a parallel between the isolation they felt to that of farm women living in remote areas whose children also left for the city. Rosemary Speirs, "Women ask help to overcome isolation, "Regina Leader-Post, April 29, 1968, 18.

34. On radio, Reid discussed her twice; briefly on the phone on May 2, 1968 and with full coverage the following day. "CBC Matinee," 680502-6 on 680910-10 (to 681004-10) and Tape #680503-8 ON 681216-4, May 2 and May 3, 1968, RCSW hearings in Saskatoon; and in Regina. "Take 30," ISN #99114, Print Master 751, 68-05-06 (May 6, 1968), RCSW hearings in Regina and Saskatoon.

35. "CBC Matinee," RCSW hearings in Regina. 1967 was Canada's centennial. The flame is literally that, a permanent symbolic fixture on Parliament Hill in the nation's capital, Ottawa.

36. Ruth Wilson, "Plea made for status for Indian men," and "Indian woman's brief asks status for men," in two different editions of the Regina Leader-Post, May 2, 1968, 11 and 16. Similar views on the damage white acculturation has done to gender relations among the Aboriginal peoples were expressed by Jeannette Lavell and Sylvia Maracle, in Castellano and Hill, "First Nations Women," 244-245.

37."Take 30," RCSW hearings in Regina and Saskatoon. CP, "Indian women just doormats status commissioners told," Toronto Daily Star, May 2, 1968; published as CP, "Society uses Indian women as doormats, commission on women's status is told," The Globe and Mail, May 2, 1968.

38. Rosemary Speirs, "Society uses Indian women as doormats, commission on women's status is told, The Globe and Mail, May 2, 1968.

39. "Take 30," RCSW hearings in Regina and Saskatoon; "Matinee" in Regina.

40. "Matinee," and "Take 30," RCSW hearings in Regina, Sask., broadcast respectively May 3 and May 6, 1968. Lavallee was apparently writing her autobiography and an account of reserve life. A profile of Lavallee, whose husband farmed on the reserve, was included in Frum, "Canadian Indians, 1968," 54.

41. Jamieson, Chapter 14. One of the women, Mary Two Axe Earley, first approached the Commission in 1967, after reading about it in The Montreal Star, saying Mohawk women would like to present a brief. NAC RCSW, Vol. 1, File SW 1-5-2-1, "Requests for information from private individuals," letter to the RCSW from Mary Two Axe Earley, Caughnawaga, Quebec, Sept. 19, 1967.

42. This was only a partial list. See Weaver, "Discrimination and Conflict," 94.

43. Wendy Dey, "Status of women: Indians tell of fears," The Ottawa Citizen, Oct. 3, 1968, 43; (no byline), "Indian women want to be Indians," Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 3, 1968. See also, CP, "'Discrimination' in Indian Act aired by women," The Montreal Star, Oct. 4, 1968, 16 and Sheila Arnopoulos, "Status of women roundup: Hearings are over, but public support is still needed," The Montreal Star, Oct. 5, 1968.

44. Wendy Dey, "Status of women: Indians tell of fears," The Ottawa Citizen, Oct. 3, 1968, 43; Canadian Press, "'Discrimination'" in Indian Act aired by women," The Montreal Star, Oct. 4, 1968.

45. CP photo and (no byline), "Indian women want to be Indians," Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 3, 1968; See also, CP, "'Discrimination' in Indian Act aired by women," The Montreal Star, Oct. 4, 1968, 16.

46. Canadian Press, "'Discrimination'" in Indian Act aired by women," The Montreal Star, Oct. 4, 1968.

47. "By Indians: Rights of Women Debated At Meet," Standard-Freeholder, Cornwall, Ont., Oct. 4, 1968.

48. Editorial, "Discrimination in Canada Not Always 'White' Failing," Sudbury Star, Ontario, Oct. 4, 1968.

49. Jamieson, Chapter 14; Jeannette Lavalle's account in Castellano and Hill, "First Nation's Women," 236, 240; Weaver, "Discrimination and Conflict," 93-100.

50. NAC RCSW Vol. 36, File marked "Relations with Participants - Miscellaneous - 2," letter to the Monique Begin of the RCSW from Mary Two Axe Earley, Nov. 26, 1968.

51. Sheila Arnopoulos, "Indian blood loses status when women marry whites," The Montreal Star, June 4, 1969, 83. See also NAC RCSW Vol. 36, file marked "Relations with Participants - Miscellaneous - 1, an unsigned letter to Commissioner John Humphrey from an Aboriginal woman, April 15, 1970 asking the Commission for its support on the issue.

52. Margaret Weiers, "One woman's view: Too little...too late," Toronto Daily Star, Dec. 12, 77.

Literature, Propaganda and the First World War: The Case of *Blackwood's Magazine*

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Literature, Propaganda and the First World War: The Case of *Blackwood's Magazine*

This paper uses a specific case study to discuss the methods by which the British government controlled media images and reporting of the First World War. In setting up the first organised propaganda and censorship bureaus in Western Europe in 1914, the British government and its military established a dual system of control that effectively manipulated and sustained an extremely influential propaganda campaign against its German enemy. These government agencies not only controlled what media images emerged from the front, but also actively organised effective campaigns to deliver these images abroad, using well known literary figures, for example, to target U.S. and Canadian audiences through literary work and speaking tours. How such methods worked in practice will be the focus of this paper. Using *Backwood's Magazine*, a popular, conservative monthly journal published in Edinburgh, as a specific case study, this paper will illustrate how such journals and media sources were used to sustain the myth of British military superiority and superior moral values for readers at the front, at home, and abroad. It will also pose and address a series of questions that arise from such a study, questions of readership, material production, cultural contexts and the connections between literature, journalism, and propaganda in the First World War. How, for example, did journals such as *Blackwood's Magazine* reach the warfront? How can we uncover whom its targetted and actual reading audiences were? How effective was government censoring and propagandising efforts in controlling and influencing print media reporting of the war effort? And finally, what images of the German forces emerged from media sources such as *Blackwood's Magazine*?

Literature, Propaganda and the First World War: The Case of *Blackwood's Magazine*

"When the vast armies of today stand face to face in conflict, they are playing a 'game' which may be discerned only in corners."
[Charles Whibley, "Musings without Method", *Blackwood's Magazine*, September 1914]

I begin with an anecdote of near death experience cherished by former editors of *Blackwood's Magazine*, or Maga as it was commonly known by its readers. It is February 1918, and in a dugout on the Arras line in France a soldier sits reading his favourite monthly journal. The call to arms is sounded and, slipping the issue into a pocket of his trenchcoat, the soldier prepares for duty. A shell explodes nearby, sending shrapnel spinning through the trenches. A fragment finds its way to our hero, digging through his clothing in deadly corkscrew fashion. It is stopped, though, by the thick pages of the magazine nestling in his breast pocket, which deaden the impact and converts a potentially lethal blow into a mere flesh wound. The chewed up pages of the journal are subsequently sent to Edinburgh as proof that *Blackwood's Magazine* has the power to save lives on the battlefield.[1] I bring this tale forward not to suggest that, like the ubiquitous Bible which features in similar wartime, lifesaving experiences, *Blackwood's Magazine* possessed miraculous powers to avert death and at the same time provide intellectual comfort for the British soldier. Rather, I wish to pose and attempt to answer a series of questions arising from the facts of the matter, questions of readership, material production, cultural contexts and the connections between literature and propaganda in the First World War. What was *Blackwood's Magazine* doing at the front, and how did it get into the hands of our unknown soldier? How can we uncover whom its targetted and actual reading audiences were? More importantly, what issues can such questions raise of potential interest to current investigations of literary journalism?

While much critical attention has focused on the role of the Edinburgh publishing firm William Blackwood & Sons and *Blackwood's Magazine* in nineteenth-century cultural and literary history, little has been written on the journal's role in the twentieth century. Much of this neglect has to do with its move away from a dominant position in nineteenth-century literary trends and criticism, championing and featuring the works of George Eliot and Joseph Conrad, among others, towards a dull existence as standard bearer for, and favoured journal of, a small, patriotically minded, 'service' middle class audience, composed mainly of military service members and colonial civil servants. *Blackwood's Magazine* in the twentieth century, George Orwell suggested in 1941, became identified with all that was considered anathema to disillusioned, post-world war one middle-class intellectuals, who equated such literary productions with an anti-intellectual, pro-imperialist mentality. "If you were a patriot you read *Blackwood's Magazine* and publicly thanked God that you were 'not brainy'," he exclaimed was the prevalent view of its content and readership.[2]

Indeed, as the modernist movement gathered impetus and began shifting the literary focus away from the concerns of a previous generation, *Blackwood's Magazine* was left behind to plough an increasingly peripheral literary furrow, relying heavily on tales of hunting, shooting and fishing to fill its pages, as well as on serialised works of 'popular' authors such as Neil Munro, Ian Hay, John Buchan and Winifred Fortescue. Reasons for this had less to do with aesthetic considerations than with economic patterns and editorial policies, derived from a particular agenda pursued after the retirement of its literary advisor David S. Meldrum in 1910, and the death of its fourth editor William Blackwood III in 1912. More specifically, it was a political and literary agenda shaped and hardened by the subsequent success of the journal during the First World War.

For current critical purposes however, the pages of *Blackwood's Magazine* prove of value when viewed as part of a specifically political product, developed to shape and mould public opinion and views between 1914-1918. *Blackwood's Magazine* was one of many media sources through which British public perceptions were constructed and manipulated during the war. Understanding the process by which it became one of the hidden persuaders of the First World War, and uncovering who was its target audience, provides us with some answers as to how the journal came to be found in a French trench in 1918.

On 4 August 1914, Britain declared war against the Central Powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary. With military action came calls for civilian support of the war effort. It was soon recognised that official mechanisms needed to be established not only to control information being published concerning the war, but also to mobilise public support at home and influence opinion abroad. From the very outset of the conflict, as one source suggests, "censorship and propaganda became the twin pillars upon which the British government waged its war of words against the Central powers."[3]

As the war gradually transformed from being one of limited aims into one of total material and military commitment, the need to maintain public morale and support for the military cause increased. The result, one critic notes, was that during the second half of the war, "morale came to be recognised as a significant military factor, and propaganda began to emerge as the principal instrument of control over public opinion and an essential weapon in the national armoury."[4] In 1914, the British government had no such thing as an official department dedicated to propaganda. By 1918, it had developed a highly sophisticated system which was to prove the model upon which other governments and foreign powers based their own propaganda machinery.[5]

The day after war broke out, Lord Kitchener, newly appointed War Minister, summoned F.E. Smith (later Lord Birkenhead) to establish an official press censorship office, the Press Bureau, which was to monitor and censor press material published in Great Britain. (Media wags promptly renamed it the 'Suppress Bureau'.)[6] The Bureau worked closely with the Admiralty and War Office, and was advised by such distinguished academic figures as Professor Gilbert Murray and Sir Charles Oman, Chichele Professor of Modern History at Oxford University. As part of its remit, the bureau was particularly sensitive to the type of public information flowing to and from the battlefront. Strict control was maintained of the printed material sent to the front, and a secret list of books and periodicals drawn up which were prohibited for export.[7] Until May 1915, the Bureau allowed only one 'Official Eyewitness', E.D. Swinton, to do all the reporting of conditions on the British battlefront. It should be noted that Swinton and Oman were not only frequent contributors to *Blackwood's Magazine*, but formed part of the journal's unofficial network of contacts with government and military sources and departments throughout the war.

Initially, censoring of articles by the Press Bureau was done on a voluntary basis -that is, the media were 'invited' to send in war material for censoring prior to publication. While such actions were not compulsory, it was in the interests of such parties to comply, particularly in light of the 1914 Defence of the Realm Act, which made it an offence, punishable by military and civil court prosecution, to publish information "of such a nature as is calculated to be or might be directly or indirectly useful to the enemy."[8] As the war dragged on, the censoring activities of the Press Bureau increased to sometimes absurd, bureaucratic levels. For example, all journal contributors serving in the military forces had first to obtain permission from their Commanding Officers before writing and publishing articles. This was then forwarded along with any contributions to the Press Bureau, who checked with the War Office to ensure such permission was valid, and then censored the piece for publication. Work without proper authorisation often sat for months in the Press Bureau while the appropriate forms and permissions were tracked down and delivered from the relevant sources.

By 1917, all material initially passed by the censors for publication in periodical form, had to undergo a second round of inspection if reprinted in book form. When the Blackwood firm proposed reprinting "Airman's Outings", Alan Bott's accounts from the front first serialised in *Blackwood's Magazine*, the director of the Press Bureau wrote back outlining the hurdles now facing such proposals:

> We must point out that the articles which you now propose to publish in book form were passed separately as magazine articles. If you now

> propose to publish these -and others which we have not seen in book form, we must ask you to submit two copies of the book as you propose to issue it and it will then be dealt with in the ordinary way. The application from the author, who is a Military officer, should be for permission to publish the whole book, and it will be necessary for us to obtain the consent of the War Office before publication can be made. It is evident that we cannot ask for the consent of the War Office until we are able to place before them the whole book.[9]

In other words, not only had the firm and the author to seek and comply with initial censoring demands and permissions for article publications, but subsequent reprints had to be fully prepared and printed before the War Office and the Press Bureau would consider approving the final product. Such tactics could wreak havoc on publishing schedules if material previously passed suddenly fell foul of the censor's blue pencil. In practice, though, previously censored material was usually given immediate approval. Such layers of interference, however, greatly slowed down and affected book and periodical deadlines, and quite effectively reinforced what these institutions saw as acceptable representations of the British war effort.

This system depended not only on censorship but on the active promotion of propaganda at home and abroad. In September 1914, a War Propaganda Bureau was set up under the direction of Charles Masterman, based at Wellington House in London. In early September Masterman held two secret meetings with authors and representatives from the press, those who, in his view, were the controllers of public opinion.[10] The first of these, on 2 September, included distinguished authors and academics such as Sir J.M. Barrie, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, W.J. Locke, Henry Newbolt, Thomas Hardy, Professor Gilbert Murray and H.G. Wells. Invited but unable to attend were Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Rudyard Kipling, who sent messages of support.[11] The result was a resolution by the participants to aid in the production and dissemination of material and views liable to promote the war effort. Material produced under the jurisdiction of the Bureau included books, pamphlets, translations of foreign material, recruitment posters, photographic material and films. A.S. Watt, one of the directors of the literary agency A.P. Watt and Sons, was recruited to become the agent in charge of placing printed material in appropriate media sources. Acting as the major link between authors and the mass media, Watt also organised the independent publication of pamphlets, books and other propaganda material with British and American publishers. Private publishing houses were recruited for this purpose, to create the impression that such material was the product of concerned private citizens, rather than part of a directed government campaign. Publishers used by Wellington House included Hodder & Stoughton, Methuen, John Murray and William Blackwood & Sons.[12]

The concerted use of 'men of letters' in propaganda campaigns continued after the reorganisation of the Bureau in the spring of 1916. Additions to the staff included John Buchan and the poet Alfred Noyes, both stalwart contributors to *Blackwood's Magazine*. Lecturing tours and radio broadcasts organised by the Bureau intensified during this period, partly to counter German propaganda efforts in the U.S. In early 1917, further reorganisation established Buchan as the director of a new Department of Information, set up to focus its energies solely on the development of texts and printed material for publication at home and abroad.

The themes and images promoted by British propagandists centred on German aggression and 'Prussian militarism'. Germany was depicted as a society based on militarist principles, whose soldiers, the implacable Huns or Boches, had no moral compunction in crucifying soldiers, violating women, mutilating babies and desecrating and looting churches.[13] Such images were not new: many originated after German unification under Bismarck in the 1860s, and in particular after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71, when German military power and superior organisation overwhelmed a French army which had been considered until then to be the best organised force in continental Europe. Indeed, *Blackwood's Magazine* could claim some responsibility for imprinting such views of German militarism and behaviour into late nineteenth-century British middle-class popular culture, through its publication in 1871 of *The Battle of Dorking*, an immensely successful and panic-causing tale of a German invasion of Britain. *The Battle of Dorking* has been widely cited as establishing the pattern of propagandistic, purposive fiction in which "the whole aim was either to terrify the reader by a clear and merciless demonstration of the consequences to be expected from a nation's shortcomings, or to prove the rightness of national policy by describing the course of a victorious war in the near future."[14]

World War I propagandist material utilised familiar images of an inherited, national militarism to provide a focus for effective, textual attacks against the enemy. Of particular importance during the early stages of the war was the justification of British intervention through the apportionment of blame on the Central Powers. The myth which prevailed until the end of the war, was that of a conflict resulting from Teutonic militarism and lust for conquest. By violating Belgium's neutrality in the process of attacking France at the start of the war, Germany provided the British government --as set down by the Schlieffen Plan-- with the cause necessary for justifying its initial entry into the conflict. Propagandists drew heavily on this point, using unsubstantiated stories of war atrocities to paint a vision at the outset of a brutal German army invading a peaceful neighbour, leaving behind a trail of blood, terror, murder and rapine.[15] In contrast to the brutality of the Germans and Austro-Hungarians, the Allied nations were presented as peace-loving countries, forced reluctantly into war by such barbarous actions. The French, sophisticated and urbane, were seen as defending themselves from enslavement and avenging their humiliating defeat of forty odd years before. The British army, joining in this defence of French sovereignty and Belgian neutrality, was portrayed as filled with plucky, loyal, cheerful and patriotic volunteers, drawn from all parts of the British Empire, and led by incisive and efficient generals.[16]

From pamphlets to recruiting posters, periodical fiction to journalistic reportage, the war effort was promoted along clearly defined lines. There was little room for alternative views. Indeed, those who challenged the status quo, or reported on matters seen to be embarrassing or damaging to the war effort, often faced censure, as was the case with the London evening paper the *Globe*, closed down for two weeks in November 1915 after it provoked a government crisis by reporting the imminent resignation of Lord Kitchener.[17]

Blackwood's Magazine, however, had little trouble with the censors, participating as it did in the promotion of the war effort. From the outbreak of the conflict, the editor was fully supportive of the Allied cause. His stance was unequivocal and uncompromising regarding German behaviour. "No one here had the slightest intention of interfering with Germany or any other continental nation," wrote George Blackwood in September 1914, "but now that we have been wantonly assailed through the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, we shall not lay down the sword until the German military power is rendered harmless to its neighbours."[18] The result was the insertion of articles and stories reiterating and reinforcing standard images and perceptions of German wartime behaviour. "He had not then taken the Moloch form that he wears today," one piece typically announced in February 1915 regarding the pre-war German, "The Moloch who suggests the bombardment of his own most beautiful temples, and inspires the massacre of women, children, and unarmed men, and the employment of dum-dum bullets and jigsaw bayonets."[19] Two and a half years later, Maga's contributions had not changed in tone. "We refuse to condone the thousand brutalities of which they are guilty," suggested one contributor in September 1917, adding, "We have not made war in the spirit of the burglar and the murderer. We have not butchered women, and robbed houses and burnt churches." (Charles Whibley, "Musings without Methods," September 1917, 422)

By contrast, articles and fiction in Maga that focused on the Allied forces, emphasised a sense of honour and unity at the front, and highlighted the good work being done by individuals at home on behalf of the war effort. Likewise promoted were militarist tropes and conventions suitable to maintaining morale at home and at the front. Contributions emphasising patriotism, honour, duty and heroic action had always featured in *Blackwood's Magazine* before 1914, more specifically in the context of the British imperial mission abroad. Whether building bridges in India, fighting rebels on the Afghan border or boarhunting in Africa, the activities of the British soldier and colonialist as reflected in the magazine's pages, were part and parcel of a popular culture that one revisionist social history has suggested was a British "world view embracing unique imperial status, cultural and racial superiority, and a common ground of national conceit on which all could agree."[20]

Imperialist metaphors, signs, codes and tropes of meaning were, as John Mackenzie and Robert H. MacDonald have persuasively shown, commonplace in turn-of-the-century, upper-middle class British culture.[21] *Blackwood's Magazine* increasingly participated in the dissemination of such codes under the editorship of William Blackwood III between 1879 and 1912. What William's successors did between 1914-1918, however, was to focus and incorporate such tropes into the war material produced for the magazine's pages. At its basic level, whether in articles, stories or novels, the journal functioned to uphold a vision of the war as a moral struggle between two empires, whereby Britain would inevitably triumph due to superior moral qualities. "The importance of moral qualities for success in war can scarcely be overestimated," thundered C.A.L. Yate in the opening article of the Sepember 1914 issue, establishing the theme often returned to in subsequent issues. (September 1914, 287)

Perhaps the most clearly defined example of such material to appear in *Blackwood's Magazine* was J.H. Beith's *The First Hundred Thousand*, a popular series of sketches published monthly under the pseudonym of Ian Hay between November 1914 and November 1915, following the raising, training and subsequent battle experiences of an idealised, fictional Scottish regiment. This work, and its sequel "*Carry On!*", serialised between January 1916 and October 1917, employed many of the commonplace sentiments and assumptions about the British warrior and his enemy encouraged by government censors and propagandists. Farcical in manner yet mindful of the task all have volunteered for, Beith's soldiers begin army life as a ragged bunch of individualists, an "awkward, shy, self-conscious mob". (November 1914, 707) Training progresses and the mob becomes a cohesive unit, bound together by common, public school codes of fair play, self-sacrifice and team spirit. Key to the successful moulding of this motley collection of shopkeepers, trade unionists and civil servants, are the unifying codes and values of war as sport.

'Playing the game' forms part of the encoded, engaged masculine trope of warring sport, or even sporting war in Beith's text. The phrase as used by Beith, evokes the selfless conduct of team play, and suggests that in similar fashion, war demanded that participants, in the words of one critic, "behave as though the battlefield were an extension of the playing field, requiring the same attitudes and spirit."[22] At times the text strains extraordinarily hard in its attempt to press home these points, as in the case of 'Wee Pe'er', who dies in basic training from pneumonia due to overeager attention to duty in the rain. Caught coughing by an officer while on sentry duty, he is commended for not reporting to sick bay. ""Good boy!" said the officer to Peter. "I wish we had more like you."" (April 1915, 454) Later, in contrast to several fellow soldiers, who report ill suffering from minor foot sores, Peter refuses to shirk his duty when night operations take place in a downpour:

> Wee Peter, who in the course of last night's operations had stumbled into an old trench half-filled with ice-cold water, and whose temperature to-day, had he known it, was a hundred and two, paraded with his company at the appointed time. The company, he reflected, would get a bad name if too many men reported sick at once. (April 1915, 455)

Peter's actions, although ultimately fatal to his health, are meant to be object lessons in faithful duty and self-sacrifice. Such loyalty to army objectives is rewarded and applauded, in this case with an overblown burial with full military honours, "leaving Wee Pe'er --the first name on our Roll of Honour-- alone in his glory beneath the Hampshire pines." (April 1915, 456)

In time, the shirkers of duty are weeded out and a sense of destiny instilled in the now fully trained recruits. As Beith's text makes clear, the end result is a change "from a fortuitous concourse of atoms to a cohesive unit of fighting men...and the future beckons to us with both hands to step down at last into the arena, and try our fortune amid the uncertain but illimitable chances of the greatest game in the world." (April 1915, 450) Once more we are returned to the vision of war as a sport, in this case war as the greatest sport of all. The sporting imagery is carried into battle, with the commanding officer "directing operations with a walking-stick as if the whole affair were an Aldershot field-day." (November 1915, 709) His role becomes that of the ideal team captain, "an upright, gallant figure, saying little, exhorting not at all, but instilling confidence and cheefulness by his very presence." (November 1915, 713) While Beith does not go so far as to quote the notorious lines from Henry Newbolt's "Vitai Lampada", whereby "The river of death has brimmed his banks/ and England's far, and Honour a name/ but the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:/ "Play up! Play up! And play the game!", the sentiment is the same, indivisibly fusing sports and war into one honourable course of action.[23]

More importantly, at the heart of the text is the stated belief in the moral righteousness of the cause to which these soldiers now bend their efforts:

> Despite the rawness of our material and the novelty of our surroundings, in the face of difficulties which are now happily growing dim in our memory, the various ranks have never quite given up trying, never altogether lost faith, never entirely forgotten the Cause which has brought us together. And the result --the joint result-- of it all is a real live regiment, with a *morale* and soul of its own. (May 1915, 630)

There is no room for doubting the end result of, and sense of mission behind these men's preparations. The socialists, trade unionists and obstinate individualists present at the beginning of basic training are eventually silenced and absorbed into the massed ranks of this new army, while shirkers and drunkards are eliminated. In the end, Beith's volunteer army possess all the right moral and intellectual codes necessary to fight successfully on behalf of the "Cause". Indeed, as one critic suggests, it is through these tropes of meaning that *The First Hundred Thousand* and *Blackwood's Magazine*, establish the ultimate myth of the volunteer soldier, a man off-handedly brave, carelessly efficient and incurably philistine, for both home-front and active service audiences.[24]

The propaganda value of Beith's work was quickly recognised by government sources. In his capacity as commissioning editor for the publishers Thomas Nelson & Sons, John Buchan made a bid to include it as part of Nelson's Continental Library series, an offer rejected by Blackwood for fear that sales of their own hardcover edition would suffer from the competition.[25] At the same time, unknown to the editor, well placed contacts in the government acted to ensure its swift approval by the normally censorious Press Bureau. Sir Charles Oman, mentioned before as one of the Bureau's top advisors, and a frequent contributor to the journal, personally took charge of the work's clearance. "I happen to be the Censor who has passed it month by month," he later wrote to George Blackwood on its publication in hardcover, adding, "I don't think that I cut out ten sentences from first to last -which is not generally the case with War-Stuff."[26]

Part of the work's appeal for the government lay in its potential use in army training. "Its instructional value for young officers would be so great that I would strongly recommend its publication if possible," noted a Brigadier General in charge of home defences at the time. He continued, "It puts matters in a way that would appeal to young officers infinitely more than any of the recognised text-books."[27] In confirmation of this aspect of the book's value, George Blackwood frequently passed on to J.H. Beith reports of its unofficial use as a military handbook. The artist responsible for the frontispiece noted, for example, "A few days ago in a lecture on Military matters we were recommended to read 'The First Hundred Thousand' as being the book --so it has become a Corps handbook-- and the ordinary textbooks on 'Field Service', 'King's Regulations', etc., are out of date."[28] Within a year of its publication in book form in December 1915, *The First Hundred Thousand* had sold over 115,000 copies in Britain and its colonies. Sales in the U.S. subsequently topped 350,000 copies, making it the most popular war fiction work of 1917.[29]

Soon "The First Hundred Thousand" was being used as the model propagandistic Maga piece. Sylvia Townsend Warner's only contribution to

Blackwood's Magazine, for example, an article in 1915 on her experiences in a war munitions factory, was accepted only after she heeded suggestions that the article be recast, as George Blackwood put it, "more on the lines of "The First Hundred Thousand" and "The Wards in War Time" so as to bring out more of the personal side of the workers and incidentally introduce the nature of their work."[30]

In late 1916, Beith was recalled from the front to begin a lecture tour of the U.S., partly to promote *The First Hundred Thousand*, partly to join the concerted British campaign aimed at countering German propaganda and persuading the neutral elements in North America to side with the Allies. "I was yanked off to this country a few weeks ago," he wrote to George Blackwood from New York in October 1916, "and here I am, lecturing on the war and interviewing reporters, and generally countermining Boche propaganda."[31] During Beith's tour of the U.S., and at the request of the of the War Propaganda Office, later reorganised under John Buchan's direction as the Department of Information in early 1917, he produced a short text aimed at British and American audiences, entitled *Getting Together*. It was subsequently offered to the Blackwood firm for publication in the magazine. The story of its production, as reconstructed from documents in the Blackwood archives, illustrates very clearly the links forged during the war over propagandistic periodical literature between authors, literary agents, government agencies and *Blackwood's Magazine*.

Beith began work on *Getting Together* in November 1916. It was to be "a plea for better relations between our Country and America," Beith wrote to George Blackwood,

> suitable for both sides of the Atlantic, pointing out to this Country that we are fighting her battles for her and that she must not be peevish about the blockade; and to our people that the real America is strongly pro-Ally; is bitterly ashamed of Wilson; but resents outside criticism of the "too proud to fight" type.[32]

Beith then offered George Blackwood the piece for *Blackwood's Magazine*, explaining it was also to be syndicated across the U.S. and then published in pamphlet form. In so doing, though, Beith made clear that the piece was not entirely under his control, but rather in the hands of the Propaganda Bureau. Blackwood had to go through A.S. Watt for formal clearance and approval from Wellington House. "If you would like it for Maga first," Beith wrote, "it would perhaps be as well to find out about this from Watt, who is in close touch with Wellington House."[33]

What emerges from these and subsequent comments is the extent to which the government encouraged such material to be circulated in as many forms as possible. While Beith produced the work, the American publisher Frank Doubleday, of Doubleday and Co., set about arranging for its serialisation in the U.S., to coincide with publication in pamphlet form. It was issued as a 50 cent booklet and reprinted in *The Outlook*. A.S. Watt, acting as intermediary, then arranged for simultaneous publication in Britain by Hodder & Stoughton. Blackwood's enquiry as to its availability for his March 1917 number, brought an instant, approving response. "So far as the Wellington House people are concerned," A. S. Watt wrote, "they would be glad to see 'Getting Together' published serially in the March number of *Blackwood's Magazine* and afterwards in shilling book form by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton."[34] George Blackwood, however, never an Americophile, subsequently changed his mind, unconvinced of the merits of Beith's arguments and piqued by what he perceived to be a total lack of support for the British cause in the U.S. "I am afraid it is not the point of view which appeals to me, or is likely to appeal to the ordinary Britisher," he wrote to Beith in justifying ultimately rejecting the piece.[35] John Buchan, in his new capacity as Director of Information, brought pressure to bear on Blackwood to publish the work, aware of the value of reaching the audience represented by *Blackwood's Magazine*. "I am very anxious that the book should be published as soon as possible in this country with a view to future happenings," he pointed out to George Blackwood. He added, in an indirect attempt to force Blackwood to change his mind. "Do you think, from the same point of view, you could expedite its appearance as much as you conveniently can?"[36]

Blackwood firmly rejected Buchan's request. "Candidly," he wrote, "I don't agree with the sentiments expressed. The Yankee proper may be pro-Ally, but he is not, seemingly never will be, pro-British!"[37] Beith, Watt and the Department of Information were left to find another British periodical outlet for the piece.

Buchan's interest in placing the Beith piece in *Blackwood's* arose not only out of his own knowledge of the journal, but also out of a general understanding of the audience represented by the magazine. He shared the sentiments of his contemporary Joseph Conrad, who wrote that "one was in decent company there and had a good sort of public. There isn't a single club and messroom and man-of-war in the British Seas and Dominions which hasn't its copy of Maga."[38] While such statements reflect only a partial view of Maga's market, they do suggest a general perception of its audience shared by most of its contributors, and more importantly, promulgated by the editor. "You should point out," George Blackwood told Watt when initially justifying his interest in Beith's *Getting Together*,

> that if the article is to appear in my Magazine, it will have a very wide circulation all through the British Empire, and particularly on the various Fronts where there are many officers who subscribe regularly for my magazine, and also to a certain extent in neutral countries.[39]

George Blackwood's understanding of Maga's audience was based on longstanding editorial policies that targeted British colonial service interests and readers. Since 1879, under the editorship of William Blackwood III, the magazine had increasingly been marketed and orientated towards this particular readership group. Once war had begun, George Blackwood took steps to develop and build on this core group of readers, supplying free copies of Maga for distribution to British naval messrooms under the Newspapers for the Fleet scheme, administered by the London Chamber of Commerce.[40] At the same time, the type of material increasingly featured in the journal, war stories reinforcing the patriotic sentiments so strongly promoted by the Propaganda Bureau and the Ministry of Information, coincided with a staggering increase in sales and readership both at home and at the front. Between April 1914 and April 1917, Edinburgh sales for *Blackwood's*

Magazine more than tripled from 4900 to 18,500 copies a month. Likewise, the London office recorded a jump in monthly sales from 4200 to 13,700 copies a month.[41] For George Blackwood, the success of the magazine was clearly linked to the firm's military connections, and the role these connections played in producing and gathering the war material featured in its pages. "The old lady is very flourishing indeed from the point of view of sales," Blackwood wrote towards the end of 1915,

> and we have certainly been most successful in the war articles which have come to us. Come, I may say, without any attempt to get them, and due undoubtedly to the connection which my Uncle took such care to establish with both the Services. He would rejoice in Maga's success.[42]

With Maga benefiting from its contacts in securing, censoring and passing appropriate war material for consumption by its readers, it is not surprising that the magazine's circulation began to rise so dramatically among armed forces subscribers. *Blackwood's Magazine* provided appropriately optimistic reading material for soldiers at the front. More importantly, it provided it in suitably small, easily digestible chunks. As Geoffrey Gathorne-Hardy confessed from French trenches after reading John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, first serialised in Maga between July and September 1915:

> It is just the kind of fiction for here. Long novels I cannot manage in the trenches. One wants something to engross the attention without tiring the mind, in doses not too large to be assimilated in very brief intervals of spare time.[43]

Further information about the general identity of *Blackwood's Magazine's* readers can be found in the advertisement pages. They provide us with invaluable cultural contexts for judging whom Maga's editorial staff and advertisers assumed its periodical audience to be. In this case, Maga's ads between 1914-1918 reveal a subtle change in assumptions about its readership, or rather an overlapping and overlaying of advertising messages seeking to address a more complex mix of readers. Initially, only cosmetic changes are evident in Maga's ads. Such is the case with the August 1914 issue, for example, the inside front cover of which features a plain announcement of a new edition of Edward Hamley's *The Operations of War*, first published in 1866 and a set text for military schools in Britain and the U.S. until superseded in the 1890s. [figure a] Likewise, an ad for the fourth edition of a manual on nursing, *Practical Nursing*, set deep in the ad supplements on the eleventh page, is headlined as a work which "SHOULD BE IN EVERY HOME". [figure b]. By September, however, adjustments have been made to reflect Britain's new wartime priorities. The same ad for *Practical Nursing* is now given pride of place on the inside cover, replacing Hamley, with an added, underlined caption announcing "The Red Cross Nurse will find this volume invaluable at the present time". [figure c] Similarly, the ad for Hamley's work becomes part of a reorganised grouping of Blackwood publications, collected under the bold banner of BLACKWOOD'S WAR BOOKS. [figure d]

Such remodelling of ads initially served to give old products a new currency. As the war continued, and Maga's audience increased, its ads begin reflecting an awareness of a wider wartime audience. Alongside ads for *Country Life*, insurance policies and P & O excursions, there now appear ads targeted at nurses, service personnel and their families. Also, Blackwood's publications begin being promoted in context of their appropriateness to war themes and frontline readers: *The Green Curve*, by 'Ole Luk-Oie', for example, baldly advertised in September 1914 as a collection of strikingly realistic stories, is transformed by October 1915 into something quite different. "This is MODERN WAR from WITHIN", the reader is now informed, ignoring the fact that these stories first appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in early 1912. [figure e] More importantly, the collection acquires a new advertising hook: it is written not by an anonymous source, but by a privileged military observer, in this case, E.D. Swinton, the official government "Eye-Witness" at the front. Promoted as a work by a soldier primarily for soldiers, and secondarily for the public, the collection becomes transformed from a mundane series of stories into "A REAL BOOK ABOUT REAL WAR". Such statements, set next to ads for trenchcoats, trench periscopes, portable disinfectors that 'safeguard the health of those who are fighting for their country', and appeals for donations to War Relief funds and frontline volunteer services such as the Red Cross, concur with the magazine's shift from colonial tales to wartime themes, and parallels the rising frontline subscription rates. [figure f]

When considered in its entirety, as a monthly product approved, printed and exported with the permission of the government, *Blackwood's Magazine* acquires an important literary significance during the First World War. The intangible signs of cultural formation, exemplified by such things as the monthly advertisements, help to suggest the values being promoted within the pages of the magazine. J.H. Beith touched on the valuable role played by periodical literature at the front when he wrote:

> Then there are the newspapers. We read them right through, beginning at the advertisements and not skipping even the leading articles. Then, when we have finished, we frequently read them right through again...They give us information as to how the war is progressing -we get none here, the rank and file, that is, and they afford us topics for conversation. ("The First Hundred Thousand", October 1915, 441]

Blackwood's Magazine participated in the promotion and reinforcement of wartime aims and values, aided and abetted by government sources and bureaus. Allied troops and home audiences, isolated and with only partial and censored access to news of the front, depended on publications such as Maga to entertain them and provide general overviews of the war situation. Under such circumstances, *Blackwood's Magazine* acted as an important conduit for an extremely influential propaganda campaign against the German forces, and helped sustain the myth of British military superiority and superior moral values in the face of adversity. For all these reasons, then, it is not surprising that our unknown soldier possessed his own copy of *Blackwood's Magazine*.

ENDNOTES

[1] It can still be seen preserved in the archives of the National Library of Scotland.

[2] George Orwell. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1982, 64-65.

[3] P.M. Taylor, *The Projection of Britain*, London, 1981, 12, quoted in Stephen Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain*, London: Fontana Press, 1990, 678.

[4] M.L. Sanders & Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda during the First World War, 1914-18*, London & Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982, 2.

[5] Sanders & Taylor, 1.

[6] Sanders and Taylor, 19.

[7] Stanley Unwin mentions this list in connection with the censoring of several books and journals published by him between 1914-1918. See Unwin, *The Truth About a Publisher*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960, 140-141.

[8] Sanders and Taylor, 9.

[9] 10 August 1917, Frank Swettenham to George W. Blackwood, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,179.

[10] Gary S. Messinger, *British Propaganda and the state in the First World War*, Manchester: M.U.P., 1992, 35.

[11] Messinger, 35.

[12] Peter Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words: Literature as Propaganda 1914-18 and After*, London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1989, 16.

[13] Taylor & Sanders, 137. For a full discussion of the content of wartime British propaganda, see Taylor & Sanders, 137-163.

[14] I.F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War*, Oxford: O.U.P., 2nd ed., 1992, 33.

[15] Buitenhuis, xvi.

[16] Buitenhuis, xvi.

[17] For further discussion of this incident, see Nicholas Hiley, "'Lord Kitchener Resigns': The Suppression of the *Globe* in 1915," *Journal of Newspaper and Periodical History*, 8.2 (1992): 27-41.

[18] George W. Blackwood to General Robert Oliver, 17 September 1914, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30401, p. 773.

[19] "The Old Junker: a souvenir," *Blackwood's Magazine*, February 1915, 157. All future references to text from the magazine will be noted in parenthesis in the main body of the essay.

[20] John MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, Manchester: M.U.P., 1986, 9.

[21] John MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, Manchester: M.U.P., 1986; Robert H. Macdonald, "A Poetics of War: Militarist Discourse in the British Empire, 1880-1918," *Mosaic*, 23.3, 17-35.

[22] Macdonald, 19.

[23] Henry Newbolt, *The Island Race*, 5th ed., London: Elkin Mathews, 1902, 82.

[24] Buitenhuis, 113.

[25] John Buchan to George W. Blackwood, 25 November 1915, MS. 30170; George W. Blackwood to J.H. Beith, 23 December 1915, MS. 30402, p. 447, Blackwood Papers.

[26] Sir Charles Oman to George W. Blackwood, 12 November 1915, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,172.

[27] Brigadier-General B.F. Edwards to George W. Blackwood, 18 February 1915, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,170.

[28] Stanley Cursiter to George W. Blackwood, 23 January 1916, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,173.

[29] Alice Payne Hackett, *Sixty Years of Best Sellers 1895-1955*, New York: R.R. Bowker & Co., 1956, 122-123.

[30] George W. Blackwood to George Townsend Warner, 6 November 1915, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30402, p. 391.

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[31] J.H. Beith to George W. Blackwood, 31 October 1916, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,173.

[32] J.H. Beith to George W. Blackwood, 11 November 1916, 12 November 1916, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,173.

[33] J.H. Beith to George W. Blackwood, 12 December 1916, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,173.

[34] A.S. Watt to G.W. Blackwood, 31 January 1917, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland, MS. 30,179.

[35] George W. Blackwood to J.H. Beith, 3 March 1917, MS. 30,403, p. 99.

[36] John Buchan to George W. Blackwood, 14 March 1917, MS. 30,176.

[37] George W. Blackwood to John Buchan, 16 March 1917, MS. 30,403, p. 114.

[38] Frederick Karl and Laurence Davies, eds., *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, vol. 4, 1908-1911* (Cambridge 1990), 130.

[39] George W. Blackwood to A.S. Watt, 26 January 1917, MS. 30,403, p. 47.

[40] Southerwell Piper to George W. Blackwood, 22 August 1914, MS. 30168, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland.

[41] MS. 30866, MS. 30680, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland.

[42] George W. Blackwood to Herbert Cowell, MS. 30402, 30 December 1915, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland.

[43] John Buchan to George W. Blackwood, 4 November 1915, MS. 30170, Blackwood Papers, National Library of Scotland.

MR GEO. R. SIMS'

Tatcho

Photo. by Lavis, Eastbourne.

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Explained and Illustrated.

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Figure A

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"Mr Harris Deans must be a delightful person to travel with. He made me shout with laughter at his description of the 'bummel.' 'Looking for Trouble' is a book to buy. The first reading makes you want to read it again, and yet again. [illegible] is so rare in the world as humour, and what a joy to [illegible] across it!"—*The Daily [illegible]*

"A most amusing account of a [illegible] undertaken in the good old Goldsmithian [illegible] with a lean purse."—*Times of India.*

"His readers will call it looking for fun, and finding it every time."—*The Sketch.*

"As we read we chuckle at almost every paragraph."—*Liverpool Courier.*

SHOULD BE IN EVERY [illegible]

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Thoroughly revised and enlarged by H. E. CUFF; assisted by W. T. GORDON PUGH, M.D., B.S., Medical Superintendent, Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton, Surrey.

"The book is one which is full of practical wisdom, the result of wide experience and thorough knowledge of the subject discussed. The collaboration between a medical practitioner and the Matron of a great Training School for Nurses has been productive of the happiest results, and it is not surprising that the constant demand for this admirable handbook necessitates the publication of new editions."—*British Journal of Nursing.*

FIGURE B

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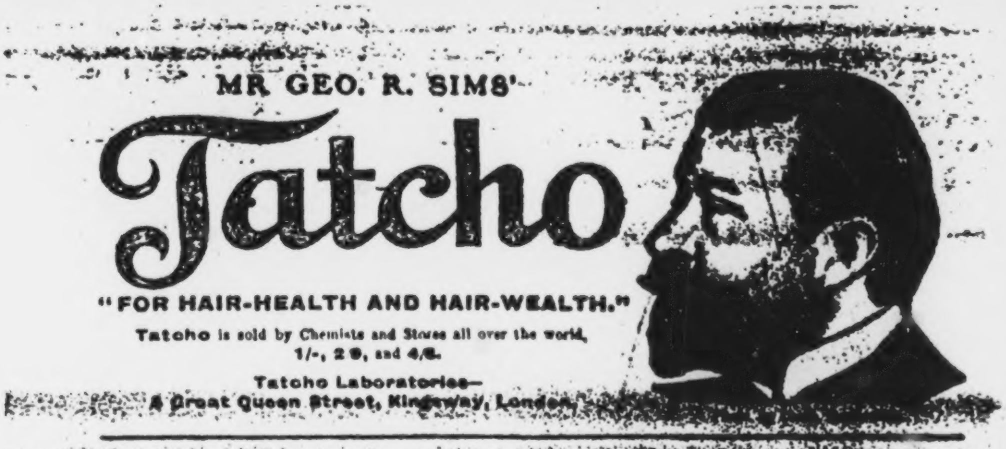

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1/-, 2/9, and 4/6.

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5 Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London.

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SHOULD BE IN EVERY HOME.

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WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS, EDINBURGH AND LONDON.

FIGURE C

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THE OPERATIONS OF WAR,

Explained and Illustrated.

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Director of Staff Duties at Headquarters.

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"Space precludes us from following in detail the closely-reasoned pages of Colonel Callwell's volume, but we have no hesitation in saying that every one who is in any way connected with the Territorial Army should possess the book and master it."—*Spectator.*

Figure D

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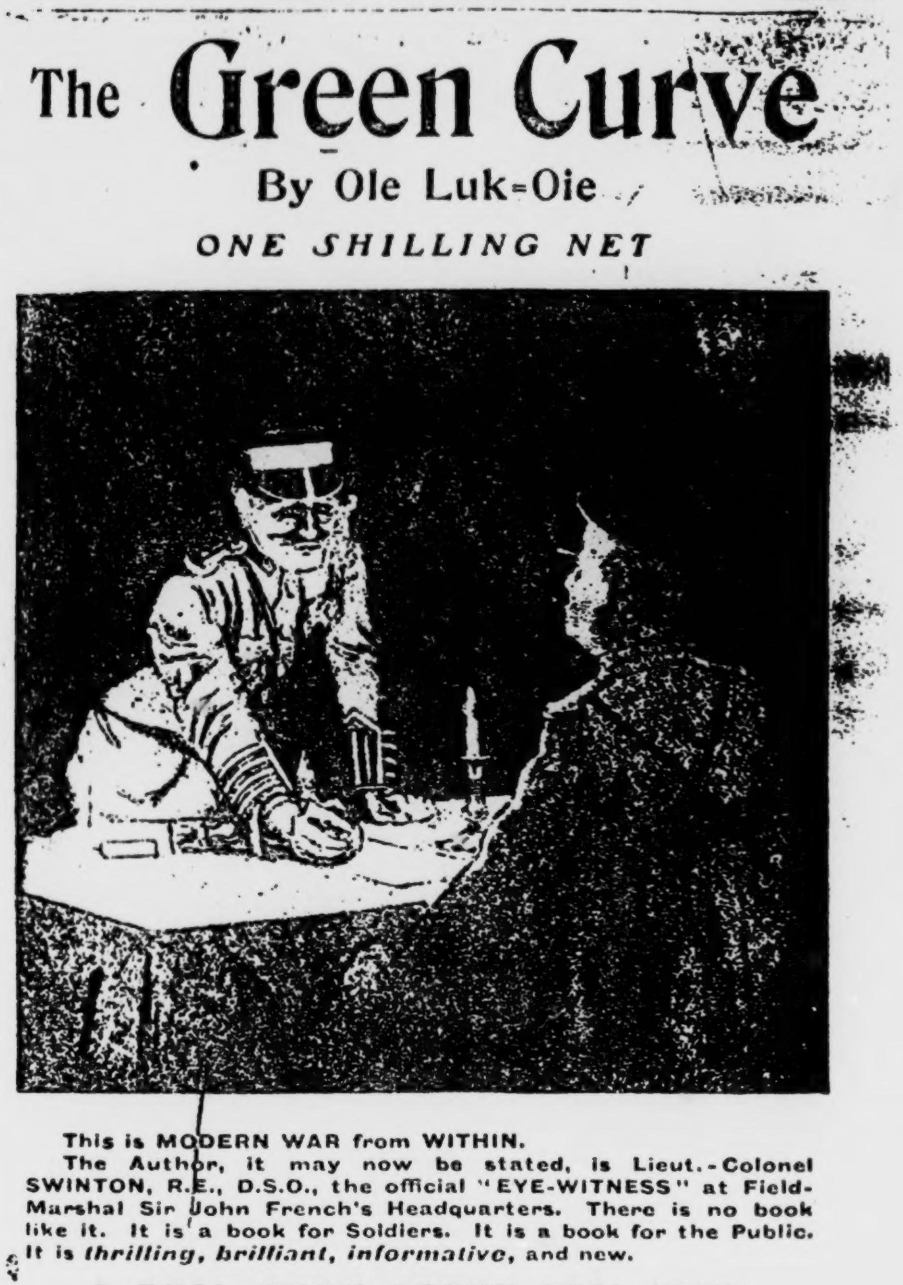

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The Green Curve

By Ole Luk-Oie

ONE SHILLING NET

This is MODERN WAR from WITHIN.

The Author, it may now be stated, is Lieut.-Colonel SWINTON, R.E., D.S.O., the official "EYE-WITNESS" at Field-Marshal Sir John French's Headquarters. There is no book like it. It is a book for Soldiers. It is a book for the Public. It is *thrilling, brilliant, informative*, and new.

A REAL BOOK ABOUT REAL WAR.

Figure E

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FRIENDS FOR WOUNDED. [illegible] home cheered in Hospitals.

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Figure F

Reasoned Protest and Personal Journalism: The Liberty and Death of The Intermountain Observer

by

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Reasoned Protest and Personal Journalism: The Liberty and Death of The Intermountain Observer

Abstract

The Intermountain Observer, like many alternative newspapers of the 1960s and 1970s, intentionally blurred the boundaries of what was journalism and who was a journalist, helping demonstrate that "the press" may be impossible to define. With hard-hitting stories about Idaho politics, and unconventional writers, it made a national impact despite a small circulation and its location in a sparsely populated western state. Editor Samuel Day became famous years later at The Progressive for a First Amendment fight with the federal government over the hydrogen bomb. But it was other First Amendment cases that would help establish the Observer as an independent voice, and another atomic bomb protest that would lead to the demise of the newspaper. A widely respected battler of the state's political majority, the publication survived as long as it did only because of subsidies from a Boise television station, raising concerns about the usefulness of alternative publications from either a marketplace or a watchdog perspective. Though similar in some ways to other alternative publications of its time, the Observer was also atypical in that it did not spring from radical roots, and its editor came from a traditional journalism background. It and other alternative publications also practiced a poverty-inspired form of journalism that, despite their short-lived prominence, may have helped trigger the 1970s boom in investigative journalism.

Reasoned Protest and Personal Journalism: The Liberty and Death of The Intermountain Observer

The 1970s represented the heyday of investigative journalism. In fact, some have argued that the press generally neglected its "watchdog" responsibility until that decade, which brought Watergate, the strengthening of the Freedom of Information Act, the Center for Investigative Reporting, and the formation of Investigative Reporters and Editors.[1] For academics, Vincent Blasi's 1977 article about the checking value of the press in First Amendment theory played an important role in drawing increased attention to the subject.[2]

Investigative reporting has been around since before the age of the muckrakers, of course, with practitioners such as Drew Pearson, Jack Anderson, I. F. Stone and Jessica Mitford drawing attention to issues--and themselves--before the 1970s. But they were routinely criticized even by other members of the press, who commonly voiced concerns about objectivity.[3] Exactly why that decade became the high point for investigative journalism--a type of journalism that some would argue has again largely faded--is not completely clear. Perhaps the Supreme Court's 1964 New York Times v. Sullivan decision, the "Pentagon Papers" controversy in 1971, and/or Watergate emboldened those in the media. Media reporter David Shaw has suggested that television played a part, that as electronic media took over the ability and responsibility of providing improved immediacy and impact, the print media were forced to turn to things for which they were better suited--explanation and interpretation.[4] Others have noted that the 1960s and 1970s brought political and social turmoil, and a widespread recognition that reform was necessary. That would indicate that the investigative journalism of the 1970s was a factor of the times, with the muckrakers of the early twentieth century reflecting--rather than causing--the general upheaval of the Progressive Era.[5]

Another possibility, however, might be that investigative journalists of the 1970s simply did what such reporters generally do--follow a lead. In this case, however, the phrase takes on a different connotation: Perhaps they were following the lead of the investigators who made up the so-called alternative press and the "new journalism" of the 1960s. Though there has been little research on the subject, one study showed that alternative newspapers in Europe appear to sometimes set the agenda through a "spill-over effect"--both in terms of subject matter and in the frame of reference used--for the established media.[6] And the 1960s saw hundreds, if not thousands, of alternative newspapers.[7] Investigative reporting provided a way to incorporate the popular activism of those publications into a format more readily accepted by traditional journalists concerned with objectivity; as one media history text notes, "Because the reporter stands aloof from the story, investigative reporting contrasts with another manifestation of the truth-behind-the-facts goal, the New Journalism of the 1960s and '70s."[8]

To view investigative journalism was a reaction to the activism of the 1960s, however, further confuses a question for which there seems as yet to be no satisfactory answer: Who or what is the press? It is a question that would seem to complicate the First Amendment, and the matter of to whom First Amendment guarantees of a free press apply. Timothy Gleason is among those who argues that the right is an individual one; The New York Times argued the same thing in the Sullivan case.[9] But others have argued for an institutional interpretation, and the Supreme Court has on at least one occasion given its tacit approval to the denial of a police press pass for an alternative weekly--the Los Angeles Free Press--despite its circulation of approximately 95,000.[10] As far as alternative newspapers are concerned, the point may be moot; though many large cities have alternative weeklies (which generally draw both more readers and more advertisers than their less professional counterparts of a quarter-century earlier), most died out, along with a nationwide interest in activism, in the 1970s.[11] As noted previously, that was just before investigative journalism also waned.

The Intermountain Observer

The Intermountain Observer was commonly considered an alternative publication and shares many characteristics with other alternative weeklies of its time, despite its start as a community newspaper and its affiliation with recognized members of the establishment--including, during its most successful and most radical period, an editor who had worked for years as a reporter for one of Idaho's leading daily newspapers. For much of its history, the Observer was an unapologetic advocate of liberal causes in a conservative state. The publication intentionally blurred the boundaries of what was journalism and who was a journalist. It hit its peak in the late 1960s and died in the 1970s. And its life and death demonstrate that "the press" may be impossible to define.

The Intermountain Observer was a collection of contradictions, packaged in a small Idaho weekly newspaper that made a national impact--even, unpredictably, years after it ceased publication. The newspaper won many awards, and its brash style drew praise from such national critics as Time, Newsweek, Harper's, The New Yorker, and the Columbia Journalism Review, despite the fact that even during its most influential period the newspaper typically distributed only twelve to twenty tabloid pages weekly to some thirty-five hundred subscribers. Those subscribers were sprinkled throughout more than forty states and at least four countries, despite the publication's regional focus. Considered a Democratic newspaper, the Observer regularly bucked the state's Republican governor and legislature--supporting strict gun laws and sex education while opposing the Vietnam War, the death penalty and school dress codes, even though one of its long-time editors was a six-term Republican legislator and one of its writers was an ousted Republican governor. Its subscription list never topped four thousand until a few weeks before its demise, a demise that came despite a special trip to Idaho on the publication's behalf by one subscriber, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas. Though a lack of money killed the Observer shortly after the last American died in the Vietnam War, the fate of the publication was largely sealed two years earlier because of anti-nuclear activities by editor Samuel H. Day, Jr.--the same Samuel Day who years later, as managing editor of The Progressive, would become nationally famous when a federal judge prevented that magazine from running an article about the hydrogen bomb.

The heyday of the newspaper began when the newspaper was still called the Idaho Observer, during 1966, because Day chose to focus on politics in what was to be a year of statewide political turmoil. Conservative challenger Don Samuelson upset Governor Robert Smylie in the Republican primary. Smylie's supporters joined forces with those of Cecil Andrus, who had lost the Democratic primary (as had Wes Whillock, one of the owners of the Observer), and those moderates from both parties supported state legislator Perry Swisher (who also owned and operated The Intermountain). But then the Democratic nominee died in a plane crash, and the party chose Andrus as its new nominee--effectively preventing the independent challenger from winning, and handing the election to Samuelson (though Andrus was elected governor four years later).

By that time, Day, once described in Newsweek as "a kind of political William Allen White who conceals a will of granite beneath the friendly demeanor of a basset,"[12] had settled into the job of editor. Before joining the Observer he had worked in the San Francisco and Boise offices of the Associated Press, then spent seven years as a reporter and editor for The Lewiston Morning Tribune, perhaps the state's most liberal daily. He spent just eighteen weeks as editor of a weekly newspaper in an isolated, conservative central Idaho town, where he "filled the editorial pages with my pet notions... soft-headed liberal views my readers were willing to tolerate so long as I continued to give them the news the way they liked it,"[13] then was offered the job at the Observer by Whillock, whom he had known for years. Day quickly put his personal stamp on the publication.

"It needed a persona; it needed an image," Day said in a later interview. "It needed a purpose." Day saw that purpose in the kind of political "personal journalism" that Swisher practiced at The Intermountain.[14] For his efforts, Day was to become either revered or hated by various groups and individuals in Idaho. "We wanted then to 'afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted,'" a former editor noted in 1972 before going on to praise Day. "No one around does that as well as Sam does; in fact, he is so effective that it sometimes becomes necessary to comfort those he afflicts and afflict those he comforts."[15] Largely in reaction to the right-wing views of the Republican governor and the increasingly unpopular Vietnam War, the Observer of the late 1960s was, in Day's words, "liberal in its politics and reformist in its approach to social problems. We investigated and reported on injustice and oppression wherever we could find it."[16] Often, it was found in the administration of the governor, who lost to Andrus--an Observer favorite--in 1970.[17] But the newspaper went well beyond plain politics in stirring things up. Neal Peirce wrote:

> Nothing in Idaho--be it the state prisons, race relations, poverty programs, Indian or youth affairs, the big corporations, J. R. Simplot [the state's wealthiest industrialist], the environment, problems of the aged, school budgets, or oppressive police tactics--is beyond the scope of the Observer's carefully researched and sharply pointed critiques.[18]

One lead article discussed what it was like to be black in a state with few racial minorities; another discussed life for Boise homosexuals.[19] One prize-winning story, complete with graphic photographs, chronicled a jackrabbit roundup, in which teens and adults clubbed thousands of the animals to death for "an afternoon of healthy recreation."[20] One story discussed the banning of a birth control handbook by a funding agency because the cover photograph (showing a bare-breasted woman and her child) and other artwork was too explicit; the Observer devoted about one-third of a page to that cover photo.[21]

Some of its columnists were employed by other papers, but the Observer went beyond that, recognizing the good work of other publications. It devoted most of one issue, for example, to a series of articles by a Nampa newspaper about sanitation problems in that city; it also discussed the backlash against the newspaper by real estate agents and others.[22] An entire issue of an anti-war newspaper published by U.S. Air Force employees was included in one edition of the Observer; Day was escorted off the Mountain Home Air Force Base for trying to distribute it there.[23] Not surprisingly, the newspaper also fought other battles for press freedom. One such battle led to the arrest of an Observer correspondent for allegedly disturbing the peace after he was denied press accreditation for a Sun Valley meeting of the Republican Governors' Association. "The other side helped us out enormously by giving us a picture of a reporter being carried away in handcuffs," Day said. The charge was later dropped.[24]

Perhaps more interesting in terms of First Amendment questions than the topics covered by the Observer were the people who covered them (when there was "coverage"; sometimes the speeches of politicians ran essentially verbatim with little or no comment). Many of the regular reporters and editors were broadcasters, and all, including Day, appeared at least occasionally on KBOI-TV, so they could be paid by the station, rather than out of the newspaper budget (which was apparently in the red most of the time).[25] But most of the publication's "reporters" lacked even a broadcast background. And far from being impartial observers, they were chosen because they were involved in the issues--or simply because they were available and willing. Day wrote:

> What separated us from other newspapers was our willingness to trust ordinary people caught up in the news (as distinguished from "objective" professional reporters) to tell the news in their own way. Lacking the money to employ trained reporters, we sought out the victims of injustice and oppression, gave them some guidance, and let them do their own thing in the pages of the Observer.[26]

Former Republican Governor Smylie was just one example. Another was the "correspondent" arrested for disturbing the peace, who originally planned to attend the governors' meeting as a protestor and wrote to the Observer to ask for a schedule of events. Since he was going, the newspaper asked him to cover the event--making him promise not to engage in any protest action.[27] The article about the banned birth control handbook was written by the Vista worker who had been distributing the handbook. Fifty volunteers visited Idaho schools and reported what they found. Prisoners were polled about the conditions of county jails. The inmate editor of the Idaho State Penitentiary magazine wrote a regular column on prison life, and a former Lewiston Morning Tribune reporter, who was committed to a state mental hospital after raping a teen-age housewife, contributed a column on the mental health system. A migrant worker offered his story, as did blacks, gays, welfare mothers, nuclear scientists, teachers, students and others. As Day wrote about a number of his reporters:

> None of them were professional media people. They were just ordinary men and women whose interests, experience, skill and sensitivity gave them a story to tell, and who showed again and again that good journalism need not be filtered through a fine media screen.[28]

Those stories probably could not have been written by traditional reporters, Day said later. "It's essentially their story, and it's not the way I would have or even could have told it, because I'm not a welfare mother," he said. "I'm a white middle class male."[29] Still, it was Day, the newspaper's most experienced newsman, who wrote its most controversial story.

Each spring, the University of Idaho hosts the Borah Symposium, in which speakers discuss and/or debate significant international relations issues of the day. In 1969, the symposium addressed the causes of violence and war. One of the several speakers was Thomas Hayden, a founder of Students for a Democratic Society and one of the "Chicago Seven" arrested in connection with protests and rioting at the previous year's Democratic National Convention; another was Philip Luce, a conservative critic of the period's so-called "New Left." The Observer reported that Samuelson had unsuccessfully tried to persuade the Idaho Board of Education to cancel Hayden's invitation. The governor was apparently reacting partly to the previous year's appearance of Robert Shearer, the editor of Ramparts Magazine, who had used a four-letter word in a speech broadcast over the university's television station.[30] Hayden's comments also were televised, as was Luce's response; both were reported in detail in an article written by Day:

> Hayden... took some jabs at Governor Samuelson, calling the chief executive a fool and a clown and saying his efforts were part of a nation-wide attempt to stifle dissent at universities.
>
> A similar situation had arisen in Iowa, Hayden said. On that occasion, as he described it, a university dean

> who aspired to the university presidency lost favor with the legislature because he failed to stop a Hayden speech at the university.
>
> "I said mother-fucker this and mother-fucker that, and he didn't get up and grab the microphone and tear out the wiring. That killed his chances for the presidency."
>
> (Hayden's language didn't seem to shake the University of Idaho audience of 1,200. As the day wore on, the question of four-letter words and their significance to the New Left became one of the minor themes of the symposium. Some of the speeches were liberally salted with shit, bullshit and fuck. All were broadcast live over KUID-TV to an audience estimated by Dr. Gordon Law, university communications director, at 20,000. He says he has received no complaints.)
>
> Luce, who is an arch-rival of Hayden, picked up the challenge.
>
> "Pig! Pig! Pig!" he said. "Mother-fucker! Mother-fucker! Mother-fucker! That sure solves a lot of problems! They're just playing with you a little."
>
> The New Left's four-letter words are like the New Left's political slogans--just a lot of talk to gain attention, said Luce.[31]

The profanity may not have bothered those who viewed the Borah Symposium in person or on television, but the same could not be said for some of those who read about it in the Observer. Though all of the profanity appeared after the thirty-eighth paragraph of a fifty-one paragraph story that began on the second page (most of the issue was devoted to problems facing the poor in Idaho), reaction came swiftly. The county sheriff, supported by the Boise police chief, sought a warrant for Day's arrest on an obscenity charge. The prosecutor denied the request, but warned the editor not to persist in such activity; Day refused to capitulate, writing, "We shall continue to exercise our judgement [sic] as to when the use of such language is essential to the news.[32] More than thirty letters from readers about the issue were printed, with a slight majority critical of the newspaper's actions. Several other newspapers in the region commented on the issue; Day later said almost all were in his favor. Several readers canceled their subscriptions; the controversy and resulting national attention brought many more new ones.[33] The article offended Whillock and other KBOI board members, but the sheriff's action "made us heroes in a battle we couldn't possibly lose, which was the First Amendment battle, saving our bacon with the board of directors," Day said.[34]

In another sense, though, that issue may have signified the beginning of the end for the Observer--not because of what it did to the newspaper, but because of what it did to those who worked there, especially Day:

> The episode exposed me for the first time to the threat of prosecution as an editor and an activist. For the Observer as well as for me, the printing of those unmentionable words was an important psychological step. It marked a sharp and deliberate break with the norms of our profession. It identified us with and helped make us a part of the social rebellion then sweeping the country. It also signaled my own impending departure from the world of established journalism, ending a journey that had begun two decades earlier in the copyboy pen of the Washington Evening Star.[35]

Of course, the newspaper had gone beyond reporting into participation before, with the frequent use of nonprofessional, participant "reporters." But the biggest action, the one which would cut the newspaper off from its KBOI lifeline, would come more than two years later, in November 1971. And that actually was intended as an act by individuals, not by the newspaper.

"Initially the incident involved only me and two other members of the staff, but inevitably the newspaper was drawn into it," Day wrote two months later.[36] What he failed to mention then--but later did in his autobiography--was that those three people "comprised the entire paid staff of the Observer."[37] In an peaceful action proposed and organized by Day, those three and sixteen other people blocked traffic on a downtown Boise street for a half hour to protest the explosion of an atomic bomb at Amchitka Island, Alaska. A silhouetted photo of the protesters and a short story containing all of their names (including the wife of the state attorney general)--though not their addresses or names of their employers--ran on the front page of the Observer. The article was written in straight news fashion, and no other mention was made inside the newspaper about the incident. But the action still cost the newspaper advertisers, and Day did write an article, including his own feelings, about the incident for an issue of Helping Hand--the same issue that was distributed in the Observer three weeks later. That was also the issue, of course, that prompted the removal of Day from the air force base.[38]

Because of the "Amchitka incident" and that involving Helping Hand, Whillock--who had previously declined to interfere despite disagreements with the editor about the Vietnam War and other issues--took Day "off the air," meaning Day would no longer do any television work for the station that was paying his salary. After some discussion, KBOI then agreed to sell the Observer to Day and others for one dollar; the group raised thirty thousand dollars for operating capital by selling shares in the publication to its subscribers.[39] The editor promised to stick to the standards that had brought both criticism for a lack of objectivity and numerous awards for writing:

> While continuing to hue to the concept of thoroughness and accuracy in the presentation of news, and fairness in its treatment of issues where there is room for honest differences of opinion, the Observer long ago shed the myth of "objectivity" in which much of the media still cloaks its offerings. We don't pretend to be without bias, to be non-participants, to be disinterested in the outcome of events. We think the role of this newspaper is not simply to report what is happening to the world, but to help make a better world. We think that, in general, we can make our most effective contribution by assembling the information and opinions which intelligent and concerned readers need in order to make their judgments. But we do not see our role as necessarily limited to this because we think of ourselves as more than just a collection of journalists. We are essentially a community of people.[40]

Unfortunately, it was a community of people without enough money. The publication had never been financially successful, even while subsidized by KBOI. Letters from Day to his writers regularly mentioned the financial instability of the Observer, and suggest that writers sometimes had to wait for money they were owed, even at a payment rate of five dollars per article. Several examples can be found in files that Day donated to a state historical society. One reads, in part:

> For some time we have been carrying a $10 credit item on our books for a couple of stories you wrote for us... We'd like to pay you in cash, but I see no early prospect of this, so I'm wondering if you'd object to our clearing it up by sending out a couple of gift subscriptions in your name. We could pick a couple of high school libraries that ought to be receiving the paper. Or perhaps you'd prefer to designate some recipients of your own.[41]

The end of the KBOI subsidy doomed The Intermountain

Observer, despite a variety of fund-raising efforts that brought the total number of subscriptions to more than four thousand for the first time. According to a readership survey, forty percent of those subscribers were from the Boise Valley, forty percent from elsewhere in Idaho, and twenty percent from out of state. They tended to be well-educated, middle-class professionals who considered themselves liberal Democrats.[42]

Fund-raising activities included "keg parties" in various cities, with the cost of admission a one-year subscription, and a summer craft show, where the newspaper collected a commission on sales. In September 1973, Supreme Court Justice Douglas agreed to speak for free--and paid his own travel expenses--to help the *Observer*; again, the cost of admission was a paid subscription. But it was not enough. Three weeks after Douglas spoke, the final issue appeared. Four pages long, it carried a single cartoon, twenty-one legal notices, fourteen small display advertisements, and a front-page editorial by Day. As part of that editorial, he included six principles he said the *Observer* had followed:

> We seek:
>
> 1. To provide a fair, accurate and interesting account of the significant happenings of our time, as perceived by a diverse, ever-changing and occasionally fallible family of contributors.
> 2. To be outspoken in our opinions and to keep our biases in plain view.
> 3. To be honest with ourselves, to acknowledge error and to be open to dissenting views.
> 4. To be accessible to those who do not enjoy ready access to other communications media and to do all in our power to help them say it in their own way, within the bounds of fairness and accuracy.
> 5. To be a part of revolutionary change, as best we

> understand the revolution, be it the saving of the earth eco-system, the elimination of injustice or simply the liberation of men and women to be themselves. Though we are newspaperpeople, we are human beings first.
>
> 6. To remember that, however important The Intermountain Observer may be to however many people, it is not an end in itself.[43]

The formation of The Intermountain Observer

Unlike some alternative newspapers of its time, The Intermountain Observer did not spring forth as a new voice for disgruntled radicals; it had two parent publications. And as with many of the individual protesters of the era, both parents were more conservative than their offspring. The Boise Bench Journal, a small community weekly newspaper serving one section of the capitol city, first hit the streets in January 1951. Thirteen months later and almost 250 miles away, The Alameda Enterprise appeared in a suburb of Pocatello, then Idaho's second-largest city. Looking back, little can be found to suggest that either--let'alone both--would lead directly to what Time would in 1969 call "a model of reasoned protest."[44]

The Boise Bench Journal was initiated largely to report the activities of the Bench Boosters' Association, a group of merchants and others who lived and worked on the geographical "bench" overlooking downtown Boise from the south. The top front-page headline of the first four-page issue read, "Bench Boosters' Annual Meeting, Monday, Jan. 8th."[45] Publisher and editor Edward Emerine not only owned a print shop on the Bench, but also already edited and published another publication, the

Idaho Farm Journal. In the first few issues, the Boise Bench Journal served largely as an association newsletter, supplemented by features about residents and businesses of the area. And even the editor may not have been extremely optimistic about its long-term future, judging by its first editorial:

> We believe the Boise Bench should have a community newspaper of its own. A lot depends on the people themselves, however, whether or not a weekly newspaper can be a success. There must be a genuine interest in NEWS OF THE BENCH and that means a lot of cooperation between publishers and residents.
>
> We are making no promises of great things. Let's start small if necessary and grow--not start big and fizzle out![46]

Membership in the association brought an automatic subscription to the newspaper, but Emerine later wrote that the tie-in provided only a few hundred paid subscribers. But, "By that time, we had invested enough time, effort and money to want to keep going--if we could." He also noted that the paper provided a means for addressing the many problems he saw with the area.[47] And Emerine, later referred to as "a fiery Democrat who crusaded against Idaho Power Co., The Idaho Daily Statesman and other downtown Republican interests,"[48] addressed many of those problems with a style--though not content--that would have fit right in with The Intermountain Observer of later years. Citing a concern for children, an editorial in the third issue stated that the Journal would accept no advertising for alcohol or tobacco: "More than that, we won't take advertising from beer joints, night clubs, and what not."[49]

The newspaper apparently drew fire quickly (though that is not reflected in letters to the editor), in its third month devoting an editorial to denying that it wanted to create a rift between the Bench and the rest of the city:

> As for the Boise Bench Journal stirring up any trouble between downtown Boise and the Bench, we fail to grasp the idea at all. We have no such intentions... We're strong as horseradish for Boise--every doggoned bit of it.[50]

Being "for Boise" didn't stop the publication from sharpening its focus, and its attacks, in favor of residents of the Bench area. Perhaps the first such fight was its successful effort to have a second Boise high school built on the Bench, rather than downtown. But the publication also built a readership among a mostly liberal coalition of other constituents. As Emerine recalled:

> The Journal became less and less a "Bench" newspaper. South Boise asked for attention on some of its problems. Organized labor had no voice whatever. Democrats felt they deserved better representation than the crumbs swept to them by the Idaho Daily Statesman. Liberals generally were sore as a boil over the domineering, Republican, and ultra-conservative Statesman coverage and editorial page treatment...
>
> We were urged to take out the "Bench" and become The Boise Journal. Which we did.[51]

That change came in November 1952, less than two years after publication began, and the newspaper remained The Boise Journal until 1962. It continued to occasionally court trouble in a sometimes surprisingly unpartisan way, successfully fending off fifty-thousand-dollar lawsuits from a Democratic gubernatorial candidate and a contractors' association. But its most expensive battle, according to Emerine, was one it lost, when it campaigned against an Idaho Power Company hydropower project on the Snake River. The Journal lost Idaho Power's advertising and job printing, and was boycotted by other corporations. "Our losses must have run into the tens of thousands of dollars over the years," Emerine wrote. "That's the price a damnfool 'crusading editor' has to pay when he tangles with the corporate pros!"[52]

He sold the newspaper in 1958 to Perry Swisher, who was by then the owner of The Intermountain and who as a state legislator had just lost a bid for the Republican nomination for the Idaho lieutenant governor's seat. Swisher changed the format of the Journal somewhat to more closely resemble that of his other newspaper, with an emphasis on statewide issues, more columnists and a more editorial tone in its stories. He was apparently unable to make money with it, however, and sold most it less than three years later, in May 1961.[53]

Swisher retained a share of the newspaper, joined by new owners Ted Eberle, an attorney, and Whillock, a former Boise mayor who was both president and founder of KBOI-TV, the state's oldest television station. Less than a year later, the newspaper became the sole property of KBOI. After that, in the words of Day, "For several years the Boise Journal, later rechristened the Idaho Observer, sputtered along from week to week, an odd mixture of local business listings (real estate transfers, bankruptcy filings, etc.), editorials of a liberal Democratic stripe, and investigative stories dug up by energetic KBOI reporters anxious to see their work in print."[54] For his part, Whillock saw the newspaper as a means of helping the television station fulfill its obligation to serve the public interest, and battled with conservative directors of his own board to ensure its survival.[55]

The Journal was then edited by Harry E. Bodine, who Whillock replaced with Day in 1964. Bodine himself later wrote about the period, "Probably the single biggest accomplishment of the 1962-64 interregnum between the Boise Journal and Intermountain Observer was that the paper was still alive when Sam Day and the new regime took over."[56] But not alive by much--Day later noted that when he started, "The grand total of paid subscribers came to 459."[57]

Day modeled the Observer after two other weeklies he admired--the liberal Democratic Texas Observer and the publication that Swisher still operated:

> Setting out to make the Observer a Democratic equivalent of Swisher's Intermountain, I and out other writers plugged the Great Society, Medicare, and other elements of President Lyndon Johnson's domestic agenda. We went after Barry Goldwater, the John Birch Society, and other right-wing causes that found favor in this conservative state... We campaigned for a stronger tax base, a bigger state budget, and better social services for Idaho's poor, her unemployed, her neglected, her sick and disabled.[58]

As noted previously, 1966 proved to be an eventful year for Idaho, the Idaho Observer, and several of those associated in one way or another with the publication. After Samuelson won the hotly contested gubernatorial race, he and his administration were to become favorite targets for the Observer, which in 1966 won top honors in the Idaho Press Association's annual Better

Newspapers Contest. In September of the following year, the Idaho Observer and The Intermountain merged, becoming The Intermountain Observer.[59]

Compared to the evolution of its capitol city cousin, that of The Intermountain was simple and straightforward. The Alameda Enterprise was started by two men, William O. Flint and Art Kurtz, who had edited separate newspapers in other parts of Idaho. The first issue appeared February 21, 1952; its lead headline stated, "New Newspaper Dedicated to 'Idaho's Fastest Growing City.'"[60] In their first issue, the publishers promised to promote the city from a politically independent position:

> We will be politically independent, yes, but not fearful or "wishy-washy." We will not hesitate to take a stand on issues which we consider important to our readers. But here again, let it be known that we will respect both sides of the issues. If you disagree with our stand on any controversial issue, you can be assured that we will be happy to publish your point of view.[61]

A box on the editorial page of that first issue--and apparently every issue thereafter--carried the words "An Independent Newspaper." Those same three words later appeared on the editorial page of The Boise Journal, and remained there throughout the life of The Intermountain Observer. Swisher became the editor of the Enterprise in August of its first year, was elected (as a Republican in a Democratic County, at a time when Republicans were often less conservative on state issues than were Democrats[62]) to the state legislature for the first of eight terms in November, then bought (with some lesser stockholders) the Enterprise the following March. He immediately changed the name of the newspaper to The Intermountain and Alameda Enterprise (later dropping the last three words), and set about establishing what he would later call a "comment weekly."[63]

Swisher was far from the only writer providing "comment" for the weekly. He recruited a number of columnists--including Vardis Fisher, the state's most famous writer at the time--and included columns from other Idaho newspapers. Subjects included the struggle for and the use of power (both formal and informal), social issues and the arts. The publication covered local news, but focused heavily on state and regional issues. It drew readers (probably in part because of Swisher's political status) from throughout the state. Later called "Pocatello's most illustrious citizen" in a book about the eight "mountain states,"[64] the publisher mounted unsuccessful campaigns for lieutenant governor and governor, attended some college classes and taught others, and, as noted previously, briefly owned and operated The Boise Journal. He opposed the Vietnam War, and as a legislator was the only representative to vote against a loyalty oath for state employees.[65] Throughout that time, he served as both publisher and editor of The Intermountain for all but the very beginning of its history, until the 1967 merger with the Observer. Even then, he remained an associate editor for the new publication until 1969, when--prompted in part by a nasty gubernatorial campaign that brought back memories of his own failed effort (some apparently blamed him for

Samuelson's victory, and Day later suggested that the financial costs of that failed campaign also forced Swisher to sell *The Intermountain* to the *Observer*)--he temporarily quit journalism and politics. Swisher rejoined the *Observer* as a columnist the following year.[66] Without a doubt, he was one of the two most important figures--Day being the other--in defining what was noteworthy about *The Intermountain Observer*.

Discussion

The case of *The Intermountain Observer* raises a number of interesting issues about what might be considered alternative newspapers, and about the news media in general. An award-winning publication that drew praise from throughout the country, the *Observer* struggled financially for two decades, and survived as long as it did only because of subsidization by KBOI-TV. The *Observer* addressed issues the state's Republican-dominated media often ignored, and provided a media voice for many constituents who had few, if any, other alternatives. Yet after the subsidy disappeared, the newspaper was financially unable to survive. As an Idaho daily noted upon the death of the weekly: "It would be as accurate as it may be corny to say that the *Observer*, in the tradition of an earlier firebrand, looked at the advertiser pressures and said, 'Give me liberty or give me death.' Tragically but inspiringly, the *Observer*, in the end, achieved both."[67] That might be of concern to those interested in either a marketplace of ideas or the idea of independent press watchdogs.

The style and subject matter of the Observer was far from unique in American history, particularly for its own time. It was modeled after other publications, and covered the sorts of stories followed by the muckraking journalists of the early Twentieth Century--and, perhaps more importantly, to a lesser degree by contemporary investigative reporters. But the Observer begs the question, frequently ignored even by those who would suggest that the First Amendment was intended to protect an institutional press rather than individuals, of just who is the press. One of its "reporters" was arrested for trying to cover a meeting. But he had been a reporter for only a day. Numerous other Observer reporters lacked both journalism training and experience; many probably had little idea about the meaning of the First Amendment. A related question might be, at what point does someone give up being a reporter? When he leads a peaceful blockade of a street in the capitol city? When she goes to jail? When he is committed to a mental hospital?

The Observer was clearly a partisan publication, like many throughout U.S. history, though it tended to support a party that happened to be extremely weak in Idaho. But it frequently raised the issue of objectivity, noting the "myth" before many more traditional newspeople were willing to admit, or accept, that each individual has personal biases. Its editors undoubtedly were wrong in many of their assumptions, and its readers were unlikely to receive a complete picture of any issue or situation. Unlike with more traditional media, however, perhaps those readers were less likely to mistakenly believe they had the whole picture. Before its demise, Peirce wrote:

> Only three or four weekly state opinion journals of comparative quality exist in the U.S. today... One wishes there were more, for they tend to crystallize public opinion and provide a journalism delightfully free of the business-oriented restraints of the normal daily press.[68]

It seems to be a journalism that has all but disappeared at the state level, and a type that the public--and those in the traditional press who follow "leads" of all sorts--probably could use. As one editor has noted, "Too often American journalism... relies too much on the facts provided by others and too little on the conclusions journalists should draw from them."[69] Advocacy "journalists" such as Sam Day, Perry Swisher and others at The Intermountain Observer may sometimes have drawn the wrong conclusions, but they undoubtedly helped show others how those conclusions could be meaningful for journalists and the public they serve. The publication earned obvious respect from varying sources; it was named an "honorary Convict" by the state prison newspaper, and Day's work drew plaudits from Democrat Frank Church and the conservative Republican congressman who later would claim Church's U.S. Senate seat.[70] At the same time, the Observer and other alternative publications helped pave the way for the boom in investigative journalism that would appear within a few years, and may have provided a foundation for the perhaps-too-uncommon explanatory journalism of today.

Notes

[1] David M. Rubin, "The Security of Secrecy," in Risky Business: Communicating Issues of Science, Risk, and Public Policy, eds. Lee Wilkins and Philip Patterson (New York: Greenwood, 1991), 131-150.

[2] Vincent Blasi, "The Checking Value in First Amendment Theory," American Bar Foundation Research Journal, (1977): 521-649.

[3] Walter M. Brasch, Forerunners of Revolution: Muckrakers and the American Social Conscience (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1990).

[4] David Shaw, Journalism Today: A Changing Press for a Changing America (New York: Harper's College, 1977).

[5] The view of Louis Filler, as presented in Robert Miraldi's "Objectivity and the New Muckraking," Journalism Monographs, 115, (1989).

[6] Rainer Mathes and Barbara Pfetsch, "The Role of the Alternative Press in the Agenda-Building Process: Spill-Over Effects and Media Opinion Leadership," European Journal of Communication, 6, (March 1991): 33-62.

[7] Edwin Emery and Michael Emery, The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1978).

[8] Wm. David Sloan, James G. Stovall and James D. Startt, eds., The Media in America: A History, 2d ed. (Scottsdale, Ariz.: Publishing Horizons, 1993): 480.

[9] Timothy W. Gleason, The Watchdog Concept: The Press and the Courts in Nineteenth-Century America (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press); Anthony Lewis, Make No Law: The Sullivan Case and the First Amendment (New York: Vintage Books, a division of Random House, 1991).

[10] Emery and Emery, The Press and America.

[11] Brasch, Forerunners of Revolution.

[12] "Noise in Boise," Newsweek, 8 May 1972, 62-63.

[13] Samuel H. Day, Jr., Crossing the Line: From Editor to Activist to Inmate--A Writer's Journey (Baltimore: Fortkamp, 1991): 72.

[14] Samuel Day, interview by author, 19 August 1995.

[15] Dwight W. Jensen, "A Time of Exploration," Intermountain Observer, 29 January 1972, 6.

[16] Day, Crossing the Line, 77-78.

[17] After that election, in which Andrus became the state's first Democratic governor in twenty-four years, the Observer names him its 1970 "Man of the Year": Sam Day, "The Making of a Governor," Intermountain Observer, 2 January 1971, 1, 4-5.

[18] Neal R. Peirce, The Mountain States of America: People, Politics and Power in the Eight Rocky Mountain States (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1972): 137.

[19] "Being Black in Boise," Intermountain Observer, 14 June 1968; "Boys of Boise Revisited," Intermountain Observer, 16 January 1971.

[20] Pete Henault, "Killing Rabbits for Fun and Profit," Intermountain Observer, 23 January 1971, 1, 4-5.

[21] Mary Judd, "The Birth Control Handbook," Intermountain Observer, 4 December 1971, 4-5.

[22] Sam Day, "Nampa: A Newspaper Looks Under the Covers," Intermountain Observer, 28 June 1969, 1, 8-9.

[23] Helping Hand, included in Intermountain Observer, 4 December 1971; Sam Day (probably), "Air Force Ousts Intermountain Observer," Intermountain Observer, 11 December 1971, 3.

[24] Dwight W. Jensen, "A 'Conspiracy' to Exercise Free Speech," Intermountain Observer, 20 February 1971, 6-7; Day interview.

[25] Day, Crossing the Line.

[26] Day, Crossing the Line, 78.

[27] Jensen, "'Conspiracy' to Exercise Free Speech."

[28] Sam Day, "The Observer: Struggle for Survival was the Biggest Battle," Intermountain Observer, 29 January 1972, 8.

[29] Day interview.

[30] Sam Day, "The Borah Symposium: A Consensus of Despair," Intermountain Observer, 22 March 1969, 2-3.

[31] Day, "Borah Symposium," 3.

[32] Sam Day, "I Want a Warrant for His Arrest," Intermountain Observer, 5 April 1969, 2.

[33] Day, Crossing the Line.

[34] Day interview.

[35] Day, Crossing the Line, 80.

[36] Day, "The Observer: Struggle for Survival," 7.

[37] Day, Crossing the Line, viii.

[38] Sam Day, "An Incident on Capital Boulevard," Helping Hand, 4 December 1972, 18, 30.

[39] Day, Crossing the Line; Sam Day, "A Welcome to the New Owners," Intermountain Observer, 29 April 1972, 2.

[40] Day, "Welcome to the New Owners."

[41] Samuel H. Day to George L. Crookham Jr., 14 October 1971, Samuel H. Day Jr. Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

[42] "The Readers: A Self-Portrait," Intermountain Observer, 30 December 1972, 9.

[43] Sam Day, "A Farewell," Intermountain Observer, 10 October 1973, 1.

[44] "Independence in Idaho," Time, 23 May 1969, 72-73.

[45] "Bench Boosters' Annual Meeting, Monday, Jan. 8th," Boise Bench Journal, 3 January 1951, 1.

[46] "Boise Bench Journal Comes to Town," Boise Bench Journal, 3 January 1951, 3.

[47] "Early Editor Paid Dearly for Tangling with the Corporate Pros," Intermountain Observer, 29 January 1972, 5.

[48] "Two Newspapers Join Forces," Intermountain Observer, 9 September 1967, 2; no byline, but probably written by Samuel Day. The Statesman was--and remains--Boise's primary daily.

[49] "The Journal and Liquor Advertising," Boise Bench Journal, 17 January 1951, 3.

[50] "All a Part of 'Greater Boise,'" Boise Bench Journal, 23 March 1951, 3.

[51] "Early Editor Paid Dearly."

[52] "Early Editor Paid Dearly."

[53] "Journal has New Bosses," Boise Journal, 3 October 1958, 1; "Two Newspapers Join Forces."

[54] Day, Crossing the Line.

[55] John Stevens and Bert Cross, "The Intermountain Observer," Columbia Journalism Review, VII, (1968): 34-36.

[56] Harry E. Bodine, Jr., "The Property Transfers Just Didn't Turn 'Em On," Intermountain Observer, 29 January 1972, 7.

[57] Day, "The Observer: Struggle for Survival," 7.

[58] Day, Crossing the Line, 75.

[59] Day, Crossing the Line; "Two Newspapers Join Forces."

[60] "New Newspaper Dedicated to 'Idaho's Fastest Growing City,'" Alameda Enterprise, 21 February 1952, 1. The newspaper's masthead slogan was "Serving Idaho's Fastest Growing City," and early issues carried details of a debate over whether Alameda or Chubbuck, another Pocatello suburb, actually was growing most rapidly. Of the two, today only Chubbuck remains.

[61] "Volume One, Number One," Alameda Enterprise, 21 February 1952, 2.

[62] Noted by Day in Crossing the Line.

[63] "A New Name, New Faces, More Alameda Coverage," Intermountain and Alameda Enterprise, 2 April 1953, 1; Perry Swisher, "The Intermountain Observer," Intermountain, 31 August 1967, 2.

[64] Peirce, The Mountain States, 135.

[65] Stevens and Cross, "The Intermountain Observer."

[66] Perry Swisher, "Signing Off," Intermountain Observer, 7 July 1969, 5; Sam Day, "Perry Swisher's Sad Decision," Intermountain Observer, 7 July 1969, 4; Day, "The Observer: Struggle for Survival."

[67] Bill Hall, "The Observer--Both Liberty and Death," Lewiston Morning Tribune, 18 October 1973, 4.

[68] Peirce, The Mountain States, 137-138.

[69] Louis Hawpe, quoted by Miraldi in Objectivity and the New Muckraking, 17.

[70] "Honorary Convict of the Idaho State Penitentiary" Certificate, 10 June 1971, Samuel H. Day Jr. Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Frank Church to Sam Day, 11 February 1971 Samuel H. Day Jr. Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison; Steve Symms to Sam Day, 15 February 1973, Samuel H. Day Jr. Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

MEASURING JAZZ JOURNALISM IN MISSOURI DAILIES OF THE 1920S

An Article
Presented to
the American Journalism Historians Association
Annual Convention

London, Ontario

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Measuring Jazz Journalism in Missouri Dailies of the 1920s

Abstract

The paper discusses the creation and testing of an index for measuring jazz journalism influences on full-sized daily newspapers. The index, called Jazzdex, consists of three, standardized, additive components that measure photo and headline size along with sensational treatment of stories. The index was tested using 14 front pages from 25 newspapers published in Missouri during 1920, 1925 and 1929. The front pages were randomly selected using multistage cluster sampling.

Results of the study do not support the historical hypothesis that jazz journalism spread from the Eastern seaboard tabloids to daily newspapers in Missouri and the rest of the nation. The predicted increases in Jazzdex were not statistically significant using analysis of variance. The study found instead that Missouri newspapers from the period are more accurately described by the diversity of treatments in headline size, photo size and sensational treatment than by the jazz journalism construct. The study found that the photo-size component of Jazzdex tended to follow the predictions of the jazz journalism construct, however.

The study also found through regression analysis that changes in Jazzdex are statistically related to the population of the city where the newspaper is published. The smallest cities tended to have newspapers that exhibit the lowest level of jazz journalism influences. Furthermore, the cities that had the highest levels of jazz journalism were port cities along the Mississippi River. Finally, the study suggests that Jazzdex might be a good marker variable for the urban-rural historical construct.

> The saxophone of sex is as characteristic of the journalistic orchestra as the short skirt of feminine attire, and it is a jazz theme.
>
> — Silas Bent *Ballyhoo*[1]

Introduction

The 1920s was a decade of optimism, prosperity and complacency. People in the United States embraced the dramatic changes in their lives brought on by faster transportation and communication, but they also clung to many of the values of the previous century. In a world that had become more accessible following the allied victory in World War I, Americans chose isolation over foreign involvement. Rather than address the new political forces created by the close of the war, by the power of women to vote, and by the moral victory and social failure of prohibition, they seemingly became preoccupied with the trivial and the sensational in the dominant news medium of their decade, the daily newspaper.[2]

Statement of the Problem

Economic prosperity, political conservatism and reaction, social transformation and cultural fertility characterized the 1920s. However, it was popular dance music that gave the decade its name — the Jazz Age. Emery and Emery argue that the "atmosphere" of the 1920s "was conducive to entertainment in the newspapers."[3]

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[1] From Silas Bent, *Ballyhoo: The Voice of the Press* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927), 21. This petulant quote may be the source of Simon Bessie's jazz journalism construct. Bessie cites Bent in his *Jazz Journalism*, 1938.

[2] Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday: an Informal History of the 1920s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1931), xvi.

[3] Edwin Emery and Michael Emery,*The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Meida*. 5th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, Calif.: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 265.

Although other possible labels emerged — Mott's gutter journalism and Bent's ballyhoo journalism — journalism historians did not attach a name that stuck to the newspaper journalism of the 1920s until Simon Bessie published his unabashed celebration of tabloids, *Jazz Journalism*, in 1938.[4] Bessie says the archetypal tabloid, New York *Daily News*, so accurately reflected the peculiar atmosphere of the times "that it came to be associated with the period almost as a symbol."[5]

Whether newspapers were to be an entertainment medium, as they had tended to be since the successes of the Penny Press in the 1830s, or were to be an information medium, following the practice of *The New York Times*, was still a matter to be settled. Walter Lippmann and Charles Mertz argued forcefully in the New Republic that newspapers should be a reliable source of information in a democracy where government policy is shaped by public opinion.[6]

Frederick Lewis Allen echoed the Lippmann and Mertz sentiments about journalistic accuracy in an *Atlantic Monthly* article in 1922. Allen complained about inaccurate news reports, the fallible testimony of eyewitnesses, bias in selection of news, and journalistic timidity in dealing with entrenched interests.[7]

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[4] Given the unfortunate tendency of non-historians to think that "jazz" journalism has something to do with a genre of music, this researcher prefers Silas Bent's "ballyhoo" journalism. In 1927, Bent, a freelance writer, former journalist and member of the faculty at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, published *Ballyhoo: The Voice of the Press*, a scathing indictment of newspaper journalism.

[5] Simon Bessie, *Jazz Journalism: The Story of the Tabloid Newspapers*. 1st ed. (New York: Dutton, 1938), 120.

[6] Walter Lippmann and Charles Mertz, "A Test of the News," *New Republic*, Aug. 4, 1920, reprinted in Tom Goldstein, ed. *Killing the Messenger: 100 Years of Media Criticism* (New York: Columbia University, 1989), 87.

[7] Tom Goldstein, ed. *Killing the Messenger: 100 Years of Media Criticism* (New York: Columbia University, 1989), 232.

Criticism of the press was often more strident than the intellectual arguments of Lippmann. A year before Lippmann and Mertz, 1919, in *The Brass Check* Upton Sinclair angrily portrayed the press as false, cowardly and pandering to advertisers and concern for profits.[8]

Another newspaper critic, journalism educator and former journalist Silas Bent, published *Ballyhoo* in 1927, a 379-page diatribe against the press. Bent viewed the press and public as interacting in an American society that lacked a common "oral or written testament of customs, opinions, doctrines, wisdoms" the absence of which caused press and people to be "unstable, mentally and emotionally." Bent believed that the newspaper editor was both "the victim and impresario of the hysteria he foments." He called the distinguishing characteristic of the press of the 1920s "ballyhoo."[9]

Among the sins of the press Bent counted:

- Trivial stories are overplayed while important stories are scarcely covered. For instance, the Cincinnati *Post* devoted a front-page, block letter headline five and one-half inches tall to Lindbergh's Paris landing.[10]
- Newspapers are uncritically proadministration. He argues that the whole press winked at the Teapot Dome scandal until two years after it was consummated and a Senate investigating committee exposed it.[11]

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[8] Upton Sinclair, *The Brass Check*. Reprinted in Tom Goldstein, ed., *Killing the Messenger: 100 Years of Media Criticism* (New York: Columbia University, 1989), 140.

[9] Bent, xiv.

[10] Bent, 36.

[11] Bent, 90.

- The press commits unjustified invasions of personal privacy. Bent cites the press-hyped "Cinderella story" of Edward Browning's adoption of Mary Spas. Spas had lied about her age and was not eligible for adoption. Reporters sought out her parents even though Browning had kept their names secret. An interviewer even carried word of the scandal to Mary's tubercular sister in Denver. The sister died a short time after.[12]

Bent also complained that newspapers had a fantastic and leering look, lopsided sports sections, and that they promoted unregulated propaganda and free publicity.

The writing of magazine editor Frederick Lewis Allen was more widely read than Bent's. Allen's history of the 1920s sold 750,000 copies and is still in print. The history included a chapter called "The Ballyhoo Years" in which he drew heavily from the complaints published four years earlier by Bent. Allen griped that tabloid newspapers taught dailies that the public tended to grow excited about one thing at a time.

> They took full advantage of this discovery: according to Bent's compilations, the insignificant Gray-Snyder murder trial got a bigger "play" in the press than the sinking of the *Titanic*; Lindbergh's flight, than the Armistice and the overthrow of the German Empire.[13]

As an historical construct, jazz journalism was assembled from such fare. Although the construct has not been universally adopted by historians, it has found its way into an assortment of texts from broad surveys of mass media to sober journalism histories by respected historians. As a result, media histories sometimes give the impression that newspaper journalism of the 1920s is characterized by the "tabloidization" of the news. The jazz journalism construct conveys the impression that newspapers increasingly adopted sensational story content, splashed large headlines across the page and used photographs more extensively than newspapers had traditionally.

One media critic saw little difference between tabloid and broad sheet.

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[12] Bent, 64.

[13] Allen, 158.

> The *News* is cheap and frothy but not, as a rule, antisocial. It is, from the social point of view, on a par with a considerable portion of the American press which, like this first of the tabloids, is given its character by triviality and slight constructive contest.[14]

A central contention of this study is that evidence for the widespread adoption of jazz journalism by newspapers included about a dozen metropolitan dailies at most.[15] Mott counted only 11 tabloids that were started between 1919 and 1924. These dailies were published in large, seaboard cities with ethnically diverse populations.

The argument that jazz journalism extends beyond the seaboard cities can be traced to Bent's *Ballyhoo*.

> The metropolitan press is the metronome and the tuning fork of the other dailies in this country. It sets the pace and strikes the key in the national diapason of romance, sex and crime.[16]

Bent observes that smaller papers carry the same stories as large ones through syndication. "In communities of 10,000 to 50,000 the screaming advertisement and the shrieking headline are commonplace."[17]

Beyond Bent's assertions, little evidence previously has been cited for the claim that all over the country newspapers adopted tabloid techniques. From limited evidence, then, journalism histories have tended to project the jazz journalism construct to include daily newspapers published outside of the large, seaboard cities.

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[14] Douglass W. Miller, "The New York Tabloids," *Journalism Quarterly* 5 (1928): 39-40.

[15] By 1930 only 12 tabloids were still being published. Lee, 276.

[16] Bent, xvi.

[17] Bent, xv.

A different conclusion is rendered by Folkerts and Teeter in *Voices of a Nation*. They identify two kinds of newspapers, broad sheets angered by the tabloids and the tabloids themselves.[18] One needs only to compare the two quotes that follow to understand the chasm that divides some historians' perceptions of newspaper journalism and the perceptions of the non-tabloid, non-urban journalist of the 1920s. The first quote is from a chapter about the media the 1920s by Emery and Emery, one of the most widely studied journalism histories in print.

> The press, preoccupied in many instances with sex, crime, and entertainment, reflected the spirit of the times. The majority of newspapers went with the tide, rather than attempting to give the country leadership either by determined display of significant news or through interpretation.[19]

The second is by the publisher of the Independence, Mo., *Examiner* speaking in 1920 to student journalists at the University of Missouri.

> The profession of Journalism is entitled to stand side by side with the other learned professions and is far more than any other, interwoven with the lines of public service.[20]

The two observers seem to be looking at dramatically different journalistic practices.

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[18] Jean Folkerts and Dwight Teeter, *Voices of a Nation: A History of the Media in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 376.

[19] Emery and Emery, 5th ed., 372.

[20] William Southern, Jr., editor of the Independence, Mo., *Examiner*, during Journalism Week in 1921 at the School of Journalism, University of Missouri, quoted in William H. Taft, *Missouri Newspapers* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1964), 251.

Purpose of the study

This study looks at newspaper practices in Missouri, well outside of the seaboard cities, for evidence that daily newspapers in the heartland of the country adopted jazz journalism content and page makeup. If newspapers outside of the metropolitan dailies in New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C., and other large, seaboard cities adopted the jazz construct, then all is well and good in the teaching of mass communication history.

On the other hand, if daily newspapers such as those in the urban and rural communities of landlocked Missouri did not adopt the tabloid practices of sensational content, larger headlines and greater use of photographs, then as historians we should reevaluate our accounts of print journalism during the 1920s so that newspaper content and page-makeup practices are more accurately reflected. The purpose of the study, then, is to determine whether "jazz journalism" provides a robust and accurate account of daily newspaper content and makeup practices during the so-called jazz decade.

Three hypotheses, if valid, support the assertion that jazz journalism is not an accurate construct for describing the newspaper practices of the 1920s. First, the study accepts the principle that, in part through the influence of wire and syndication services, newspapers broadly reflected the dramatic social change following the end of the World War I: prohibition, growing consumerism, women's suffrage, the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan, militant unionism and the reactionary "red-baiting" associated with it. The physical manifestation of these changes was a more sensational approach to story content. However, the study anticipates that the sensationalism is less extensive outside of metropolitan newspapers than journalism histories suggest. A formal hypothesis — that the sensationalism of story content increased — would be accepted. Second, headline formats were comparatively stable during the decade with dramatically larger type more likely to be associated with metropolitan newspapers than community dailies.

Because more Missouri newspapers could be classified as community, rather than metropolitan, a formal hypothesis that headline sizes increased during the 1920s would be rejected. Third, use of photography, even if it did increase, was minimal. A formal hypothesis that photography increased during the decade would be rejected.

According to the historical accounts it can be predicted that any jazz journalism effect would be minimal in 1920. Then the effect would increase through the middle years of the decade before declining by 1929 with the beginning of the Great Depression.

Four formal hypotheses were proposed about practices in Missouri from historical accounts of newspaper journalism in the 1920s:

H_1: Jazz journalism in Missouri dailies was more prevalent in 1925 than in 1920 or 1929.

H_2: The sensational treatment of stories in Missouri dailies was more prevalent in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

H_3: Headline sizes in Missouri dailies were larger in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

H_4: Photograph sizes in Missouri dailies were larger in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the construct "jazz journalism" is used in its broadest sense, including not only those tabloids that developed the innovation, but also broad sheet newspapers that adopted sensational story content, large headlines and more extensive use of photographs than their non-adopting counterparts.

Sensationalism is often defined by listing types of stories that tend to be sensational. Stories about crime and scandal, stories with sexual content, human interest stories and sports stories commonly are considered sensational by histories about the 1920s.

Frank Luther Mott argues that sensationalism in news is good because it makes the news exciting to read.

> It would be a torpid and spiritless reader indeed — a cold fish, a vegetable — who would pass by everything sensational in his newspaper to read only that which, important or not, afforded the very lowest degree of emotional stimulation.[21]

Mott argues that violent contests in war, politics, sports, or social intercourse, disasters, horrors, most crime and sex incidents and many human-interest stories are appropriately high in sensationalism. "It is the overemphasis on this high sensationalism in the news and the appeal to morbid interests which are more properly subject to severe criticism."[22] He wrote.

However, more recent scholarship by Tannenbaum and Lynch has shown that each of these story types can be written with great or small degrees of sensationalism. In keeping with the Tannenbaum and Lynch idea that story types may be either high or low in sensationalism, and Mott's argument that it is the "overemphasis" of high sensationalism that makes for bad journalism, sensationalism was defined in this study as a news story treatment that has one or more of the following characteristics: The story overemphasizes or exaggerates vivid sensory details. The story is about a needlessly emotion-charged subject. The story wildly dramatizes events. The story employs language or artistic expressions intended to pointlessly shock, startle, thrill, or excite the reader.

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[21] Frank Luther Mott, *The News in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), 48.

[22] Mott, *News in America*, 49.

The study applies the Tannenbaum and Lynch semantic differential Sendex scale to measure sensationalism.[23] The Sendex scale consists of 12 bipolar adjectives that Tannenbaum and Lynch have shown to be related to the semantic concept of sensationalism.

Headline is any display type that provides a title for a news story using a type style, and/or size different from the text type of the story. Subheadings within the same story are excluded.

A photograph is any continuous-tone image displayed as half-tone in the news pages. Photographs in advertisements are excluded.

On the surface the meaning of the term "1920s" would seem to be clear. However, some histories treat the 1920s as if they began with the publication of the first issue of the New York *Illustrated Daily News* on June 26, 1919.[24] For this study, the decade of the 1920s begins Jan. 1, 1920, and ends Dec. 31, 1929.

Several terms related to newspapers need to be defined. A broad sheet is a full-sized newspaper. During the 1920s a broad sheet was a six-column page or more, measuring about 18 inches by 22 inches, though the dimensions varied from paper to paper.[25] A tabloid is the size of a broad sheet folded in half, roughly 11 inches by 18 inches. A daily newspaper is a news journal that publishes at least one edition, five times or more per week.

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[23] Percy H. Tannenbaum and Mervin D. Lynch, "Sensationalism: The Concept and Its Measurement," *Journalism Quarterly* 37 (1960): 381-392.

[24] Folkerts and Teeter give the date as June 23, 1919.

[25] Folkerts and Teeter, 378.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was twofold. First, it sought to create new knowledge about the extent to which jazz journalism diffused into the non-urban, non-tabloid press of the 1920s. It sought to test the widely published belief that print journalism during the "jazz age" consisted primarily of adopters of the jazz construct. Also, the study sought to determine the degree to which individual components of the jazz construct could be observed in the sample of newspapers studied.

A feature of this research was the construction of a jazz index that permited story content, headline style and use of photography to be compared across newspapers and time periods. For instance, the front pages of a set of newspapers from 1920 were compared to a set of newspapers from 1925 and 1929 to determine the degree of "jazzness" they exhibited. To do this, each edition was scored according to what percentage of the front page consists of photographs, what percentage of the front page was used by the headlines of four randomly selected stories, and the total amount of sensationalism those same stories represented. The three scores were transformed into equivalent units of measure then added together to arrive at an index of "jazz journalism." By comparing the means of the index for the three study years, it was possible to determine whether jazz journalism followed the pattern predicted by historians.

Assumptions and Limitations

The most fundamental assumption this study makes was that any non-urban, non-tabloid set of newspapers can be studied to determine the level of jazz journalism influence in their pages. Consequently, this study could have been conducted with any fairly complete collection of newspapers from the decade as long as they were not just urban papers or tabloids.

Given this assumption the study examined a random sample of Missouri daily newspapers on microfilm from the State Historical Society. Missouri newspapers were chosen because they fit the criteria stated above and because they are highly accessible. The entire sample for the study is on microfilm and available through interlibrary loan. The state had two cities that fit the definition of urban used in this study and three important daily newspapers with 100,000 or more circulation. Seventy-five daily newspapers were being published in the state at the start of the 1920s, most of which were rural. None were tabloids.[26]

The population to be examined included only newspapers from Missouri, so inferential statistics are projected only for Missouri. A finding that the construct was not as extensive in Missouri as the conventional view suggests would be considered evidence that to focus on jazz journalism as the principal historical construct is misleading.

Population and Sample

The headline, content and photograph data used for this study were compiled from a population of 75 daily newspapers published in Missouri during the 1920s. A random sample of 25 newspapers was drawn from the 55 available daily newspapers in the State Historical Society Newspaper Library. Adjustments were made for newspapers that underwent name changes. Morning and evening editions published by the same publisher were counted as different newspapers.

The accuracy of the sample was checked by comparing the mean circulation of the sample with the mean circulation of the newspapers not included in the sample. A *t* test was used to determine whether the means of the two groups were different. The results of the two-tailed t test indicated that circulation means of the sampled and non-sampled newspaper were statistically the same.[27]

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[26] The number of dailies declined to 66 by 1929. From N.W. Ayer & Son's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals cited in William H. Taft, "Missouri Newspapers: 1808-1962 Record of the Press in the History of the State," unpublished manuscript.

Three different years, 1920, 1925 and 1929, were chosen. Publication dates for 42 daily editions of each newspaper were divided equally among the three years, representing the beginning, middle and end of the decade.[28] To draw an appropriate sample, 14 dates for each year were picked randomly.

Variables Studied

Three types of information from the front pages of the newspapers were collected for the study:

- Percentage of photographs on the page.
- Percentage of the page used by headlines from four randomly selected stories.
- The sensational content of the four stories that go with the headlines above was measured.

These three measures were standardized, then summed to create an index measuring the "jazzness" of the front page for each edition from the sample.

The dependent variable in this study was the jazz index. Taking Tannenbaum's and Lynch's Sendex sensationalism index as a precedent, this study called the new measure, Jazzdex. Jazzdex is a an interval-level number representing the sum of its standardized photography, headline, and content components:

$$\text{Jazzdex} = z_{\text{Photos}} + z_{\text{Headlines}} + z_{\text{Story content}}$$

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[27] $t = -0.73$ with $p = 0.468$ indicates the null hypothesis that the newspaper-circulation means are equal must be accepted.

[28] Not every newspaper ended up with 42 editions in the sample. Some newspapers quit publishing during the study period. Some newspapers started publishing after the beginning of the study period, and occasionally an edition was not available in the Newspaper Library.

Standardized scores were used because they influence the dependent variable with the same unit of measure, standard deviations from the mean. For instance, because by definition the mean of a z score is zero, two different newspapers whose photo, headline and content scores were average would both have a Jazzdex score of zero.

Photography Component

Only half-tone art was included in the photo component. The proportion of photographs on the page was calculated by dividing the summed area of photographs on the page by the area of the page, both measured in inches. The larger the percentage of photographs, up to 100 percent, the greater the "jazzness" of the page.

Randomly Selecting Stories

The other two components, headlines and story content were derived by randomly selecting four stories on the front page.[29] The headline measures and the story sensationalism indexes were summed to arrive at a headline score and story score for each front page.

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[29] To randomly select stories, first the stories on the page were counted. Then, a computer random-number generator was used to select four numbers between zero and the number of stories on the page. The researcher used the four numbers to identify which stories to code. By counting from the top left-most story, down the first column, then continuing down from the top of the second column, the pattern was repeated until all four stories were identified.

1

Modified Sendex Scale for Sensationalism Judgments

	very	quite	slightly	neutral	slightly	quite	very	
accurate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	inaccurate
good	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	bad
responsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	irresponsible
wise	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	foolish
acceptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unacceptable
colorful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	colorless
interesting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	uninteresting
exciting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unexciting
hot	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	cold
active	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	passive
agitated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	calm
bold	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	timid

Headline Component

The "jazzness" of a particular headline was measured by the proportion of the page area that it uses. The area of each of the four headlines was determined by measuring its height from the top of the ascenders in the top line to the bottom of the descenders of the last line of type, then multiplying that value times the width of the headline from gutter to gutter. All measurements were in inches. The value was expressed as a percentage by dividing it by the area of the page. Then, the four headline proportions were summed to arrive at the proportion of area that headlines occupy on the page. The larger the percentage of headline area, the greater the "jazzness" of the page.

Story-content Component

Of the three components, measuring the level of sensationalism in the news stories of Missouri's dailies was the most troublesome because it is inherently a subjective measure. Tannenbaum and Lynch make a strong case for using semantic differnetial to measure the sensational treatment of the story. Consequently, a version of the Sendex technique, modified by the researcher, was used.[30] The modified Sendex scale creates an additive index that quantifies the sensational treatment of the news story. For this study, the modified Sendex was used to evaluate the level of sensationalism in more than 3,400 stories.

Table 1 shows the modified version of Sendex used. Adjectives indicating low sensationalism were moved to the left side of the scale, where numbering starts more intuitively at 1, and adjectives indicating high sensationalism were moved to the right where numbering terminates at 7. The result was a simple, 12-dimension additive scale in which a low score of 12 means little sensationalism and a high score of 84 means high sensationalism.

Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted prior to gathering data for the full study. The first was a validity test of the Sendex instrument, and the second was a test of the refined jazz index, using it to compare a non-jazz with a jazz newspaper. Validity was tested by comparing the front pages of seven 1925 editions of *The New York Times* with seven editions of the New York *Daily News* with the same dates. These two newspapers represent respectively a non-jazz journalism and a jazz journalism newspaper. Study procedures were modified based on these pilot studies.

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[30] Percy H. Tannenbaum and Mervin D. Lynch, "Sensationalism: The Concept and Its Measurement," *Journalism Quarterly* 37 (1960): 381-392.

Gathering The Data

After the pilot studies were conducted, data for the general study were collected. Newspapers were viewed on microfilm readers at the Missouri State Historical Society. Some newspapers were examined in photocopied form. Measurements in either case were recorded directly into a computer database.[31]

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data required comparison of the means of the Jazzdex scores for each of the three years studied. *z* Scores of the three Jazzdex components were calculated. For instance, where the mean value of the area of front pages used for photographs was 10 percent and the standard deviation was 0.1, if an issue of the 1929 Columbia Tribune used 15 percent of its front page for photographs, then

$$z_{\text{component}} = \frac{\text{score}_{\text{component}} - \text{mean}_{\text{decade}}}{\text{standard deviation}_{\text{decade}}}$$

$$z_{\text{compenent}} = \frac{0.15 - 0.10}{0.10}$$

$$z_{\text{compenent}} = \frac{0.05}{0.10}$$

$$z_{\text{compenent}} = 0.5$$

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[31] Filemaker Pro 1.0 Version 1 (Santa Clara, Calif: Claris).

or, half a standard deviation above the decade mean for photographs.[32] The photograph component z score was substituted into the Jazzdex formula (see page 14), along with similar z scores for the headline and story components. The three values were summed to arrive at the Jazzdex score for that front page.

Scores higher than 0.0 would mean greater "jazzness" for that component. A negative component score would mean less "jazzness." By using z scores in this fashion, each of the three components had equal influence in determining the final Jazzdex score.

Reliability of Jazzdex

Only one person coded front pages. Reliability was assessed. The stability of jazzdex was assessed by recoding 11 randomly selected front pages from the original data set.[33] After recoding, the three jazz components were calculated the same way as the original data.

Intracoder reliability was tested for each of the three components of the jazz index. Both photo and headline proportions of the page have correlations of $r > 0.97$ between the original data coding and the coding for the reliability check. The correlation between the two codings for the level of content sensationalism was $r = 0.72$. The correlations for all three components were statistically significant at $p < .05$. The intracoder reliability of Sendex was also evaluated using Scott's *pi*. A *pi* value of 0.2453 was returned, indicating that the Sendex was also reliable.

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[32] The score is hypothetical and probably too high..

[33] N.M. Downie and R.W. Heathe, *Basic Statistical Methods* 3d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 237. The number 11 was chosen because it is one more than the number 10, which would have required a special small-sample formula for calculating Spearman rank order correlation. Spearman's shows the degree of monotonic relationship (an increase in one variable is always followed by an increase in the other) between two variables that are arranged in rank order. Both Spearman *rho* and Pearson's *r* were calculated to satisfy concerns about treating a summed ordinal-level semantic differential measurement as interval-level.

Internal consistency

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's *alpha*. Cronbach's *alpha* is a measure of the consistency of items in an index. Cronbach's *alpha* was applied to each of the four stories individually, then to the combined dimensions from each story to arrive at an *alpha* statistic for the whole page. The *alpha* scores for Stories 1, 2, 3 and 4 were 0.927, 0.930, 0.930 and 0.927 respectively. When the dimensions were combined to create a score for the entire page, *alpha* was 0.911. These scores are evidence of a high degree of internal consistency for Sendex in this study.

Findings for the Decade

The data gathered included 861 front pages from 31 of Missouri's 75 daily newspapers, representing 19 different cities.[34] 1920 was undersampled, comprising 29.3 percent of the front pages studied compared with 35.0 percent and 35.8 percent for 1925 and 1929 respectively. The undersampling did not affect the analysis of the data.[35]

Analysis of the Jazz Index and its Components

The analysis of the data on Missouri daily newspapers looked first at Jazzdex and its components — photographs, headlines and sensational content — using one-way

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[34] Newspapers were counted if they had a unique title. For instance, two newspapers that merged into one were counted as three separate papers.

[35] Gudmund R. Iversen and Helmut Norpoth. *Analysis of Variance Series: Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1976), 26.

2
Means of Jazzdex by Year

Year	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Decade	851	0.01	1.95
1920	250	-0.19	1.92
1925	299	0.18	2.05
1929	302	0.00	1.85

ANOVA as the statistical procedure. To do so showed whether means of Jazzdex and the three components were equal for the three study years — 1920, 1925 and 1929.

Where the means were equal, the historical construct, jazz journalism, was inaccurate for Missouri newspapers. Where the means were not equal, the jazz journalism construct was supported if the jazz index increased from 1920 to 1925, then declined from 1925 to 1929, reflecting the predicted historical trend.

Table 2 shows the changes in Jazzdex when its means were calculated for each study year. The table shows that the "jazzness" of Missouri daily front pages was higher in 1925 than in 1920, changing respectively from -0.19 to 0.18. Then the index decreased from 1925 to 1929, or 0.18 to 0.00, just as historical accounts predicted. If differences in these means proved to be statistically significant, then the traditional historical account of jazz journalism spreading to the nation's newspapers from the eastern metropolitan tabloids and broadsheets was supported by evidence from Missouri dailies.

One-way ANOVA was the appropriate statistical test when the categorical variable, in this case "year," contained more than two groups.[36] The results with an F =

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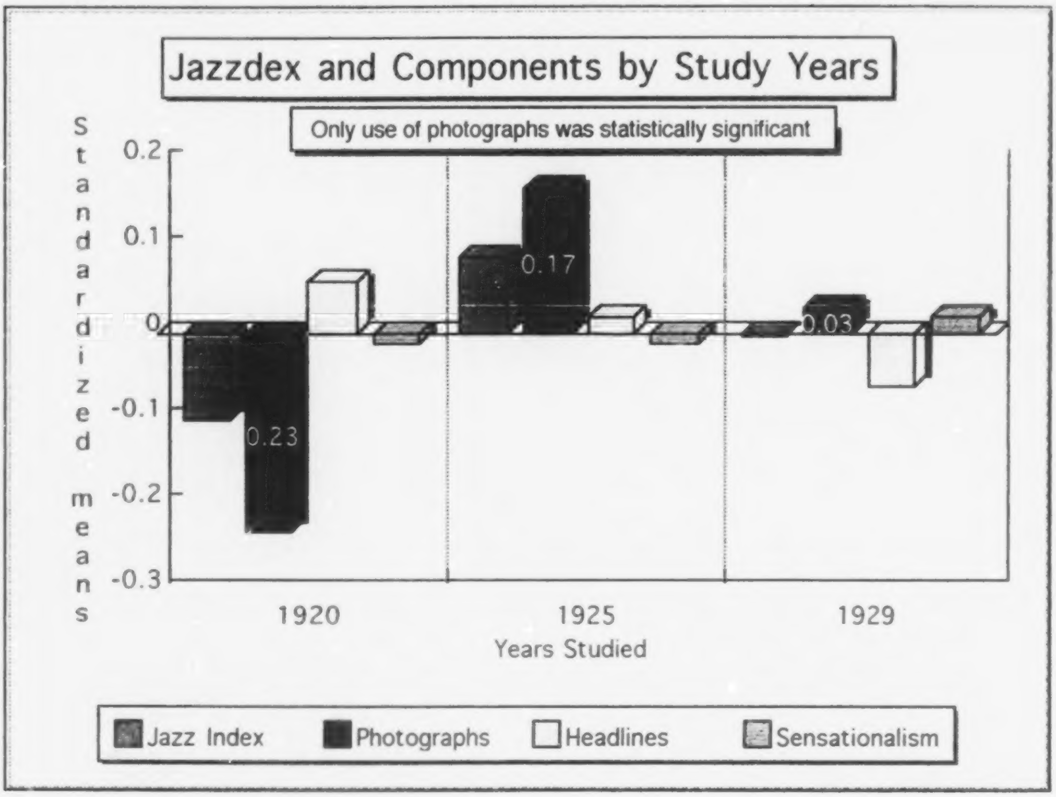
[36] A series of *t*-tests pairing the three years as 1920/1925, 1920/1929, and 1925/1929 could be conducted, but such *t*-tests would fail to account for the interaction of data across the three years. ANOVA corrects for the shortcoming. N.M. Downie and R.W. Heathe, *Basic Statistical Methods*, 3d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 215.



2.49 and p = 0.08, indicated that we cannot say with certainty that the means were different.[37] This finding is reinforced by the values of the power measure eta-squared. Eta-squared showed that differences between years explained only 0.1 percent of the variance in the jazz index. The researcher concluded from the accepted null hypothesis and from the small value of eta-squared that the traditional historical accounts of jazz journalism tended not to be reflected in the front-page practices of Missouri dailies.

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[37] On df=2, 848.

Other Explanations for Variance in Jazzdex

The importance of the correlation ratio in analyzing Jazzdex is clarified by looking at the effect on the jazz index of two other variables: newspapers and cities. The one-way ANOVA results for Jazzdex grouped by these two variables were $F = 12.40$ and $p < 0.00$ for mean differeent practices by different newspapers and $F = 20.48$ and $p < 0.00$ for mean different practices associated with different cities. In both analyses, $p < 0.05$ leads to rejecting the null hypothesis that the means of these groups are equal. When Jazzdex was grouped by newspapers as the only independent variable, *eta-squared* = 0.33, meaning that differences between newspapers accounted for 33 percent of the variance in Jazzdex. Similarly, when Jazzdex was grouped by cities, *eta-squared* = 0.31, meaning differences between the cities where newspapers were published accounted for 31 percent of the variance in Jazzdex.

The researcher concluded from these analyses that the newspaper being studied and the city where the newspaper was published made a greater difference in the degree of "jazzness" on the front page than whether the edition was published in 1920, 1925 or 1929.

Three newspapers were one or more standard deviations above the jazz index mean of 0.01 when their jazz scores were aggregated. The heavy adopters of jazz journalism were the St. Louis *Times* (2.18) and the Cape Girardeau *Southern Missourian* (2.03) and the Carthage *Evening Press* (1.96).

Photograph, Headline and Sensational Content

Two insights were gained by looking at the individual components that comprised the jazz index. First, the reason jazz journalism tended not to operate in Missouri dailies became clearer. And, second, the behavior of the three jazz components themselves illuminated the practices of Missouri papers.

The mean proportion of the front page dedicated to photographs doubled from 1.61 percent to 3.30 percent in Missouri dailies when 1920 is compared to 1925. The increase was followed by a 17.6 percent decline in photo use in 1929.[38] Analysis of variance results of $F = 11.49$ and $p < 0.05$ indicated that the differences in these means were statistically significant. Even so, the eta-squared value indicated that differences between the years 1920, 1925 and 1929 account for only about 3 percent of the variance in photograph usage. The photograph component, then, followed the pattern predicted by journalism histories.

However, usage of photographs was the exception rather than the rule; 525 of 861 front pages, or 61 percent, had no photographs in this sample. When the front page included photographs, they were small. Of the newspapers that used photographs, no edition used more than 23 percent of its front page for photographs, and the mean proportion, excluding pages without photos, was 6.7 percent of the page.[39]

Headline usage in the sample did not support the predicted jazz construct. Proportionately smaller headlines were used in 1925 (3.47 percent) than in 1920 (3.60 percent) and smaller yet in 1929 (3.25) than in 1925. Where the historical jazz construct predicts larger headlines, Missouri dailies used smaller headlines.[40]

ANOVA indicated that the differences in these groups were too slight to be statistically significant. Headlines grouped by year had an $F = 1.12$ for $p = 0.33$, requiring the null hypothesis be accepted.

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[38] Plus or minus 3 percent for $N = 861$.

[39] Standard deviation = 4.313 when only those newspapers using photographs are included.

[40] Four stories were randomly selected from each of the 861 pages studied, yielding $N = 3444$ for a sampling error of plus or minus 2.0 percent.

Sensational content also failed to follow the predicted jazz pattern in Missouri dailies for the years studied. With $F = 0.07$ and $p = 0.93$, the differences between the means of the Sendex score for sensational content were not statistically significant. *eta-squared* = 0.00 indicating that none of the variance of sensational content was attributable to differences between the years. The sensational content component of jazz journalism did not follow the predicted pattern.

Population and Story Source Influence Jazzdex

Earlier statistical analysis showed that differences between newspapers and differences between cities were significant influences on the variance in Jazzdex. Bent argued as early as 1927 that news generated in the nation's largest metropolitan areas was transmitted to smaller cities by way of newspaper syndicates.

The study used multiple regression analysis to test the proposition that wire services, newspaper circulation, city population, and county population influenced sensational story content. Jazzdex was the dependent variable. The independent variables were: the source of each coded story (local or non-local), newspaper circulation, and the populations of the city and county where the newspaper was published. These variables are called respectively Story Source, Circulation, City Population and County Population.

Story Source was a nominal variable and had three possible values — zero, one or nine. Zero meant that each of the four stories sampled on the front page was about something that happened within the newspaper's circulation area and that the story lacked wire service, syndication or other credit indicating that it was not staff written. The value, 1, meant that one of the four stories examined from that edition was about something that happened outside of the newspaper's circulation area, or that it was accompanied by wire service or syndication credit. The value, 9, meant that the

3

Regression Analysis of How City and County Population, and Story Source Influenced Jazzdex

Variables	Slope (B)	Partial	p
City population	0.0000026	0.25688	0.0001
County population	-0.0000031	-0.18571	0.0001
Story source	1.02451	0.18432	0.0001
Constant	-0.91827		0.0001
$R^2 = 0.1119$	Adj. $R^2 = 0.1076$		

researcher could not determine whether the story was local or nonlocal. Such stories were treated a missing values for purpose of analysis. Circulation and population data were compiled from the respective Ayer directory for each of the three study years — 1920, 1925 and 1929.[41]

The study also tested whether an interaction existed between the local or nonlocal source of the stories and the circulation and population variables. First-order interaction variables were created by multiplying the value of Story Source with the values of Circulation, City Population and County Population.

Each equation was tested for the multiple regression assumptions of normal distribution, constant variance, linearity and sample independence. Cases that were outliers, those with standardized residuals above three standard deviations, were dropped from the analysis. Twelve outliers were dropped.[42] After excluding cases with missing values and outliers, 755 valid cases remained for analysis.

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[41] N.W. Ayer & Son, *American Newspaper Annual and Directory: 1910-1929* (Philadelphia, 1909-1929) vols. 1921 and 1926, and *Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals: 1930-1936* (Philadelphia, 1930-1936) 1931. Data in the directory is for the prior year.

The regression analysis was started with all of the main effects and the first-order interactions in the model. Variables with the highest nonsignificant value of p were dropped one at a time, starting with the first-order interactions. Then the main effects with the next highest nonsignificant value of p were dropped. Nonsignificant main effects were retained if they were part of a significant interaction. The process was repeated until only statistically significant main effects and/or interactions remained in the model.

Influences on Jazzdex

Each of the main effects was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, except circulation. No interaction was statistically significant and each was omitted from the table.

The information in the table was used to develop the following regression equation:

$$\text{Jazzdex} = -0.918 + .0000026(\text{city}) - .0000031(\text{county}) + 1.024(\text{wire})$$

Where city and county represent the respective populations of the location where the newspaper was published. The Jazzdex equation accounts for 10.8 percent of the relationship between the independent variables and Jazzdex after $R2$ is adjusted.

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[42] Outliers increase variance and exert a disproportionately strong pull on the regression. Cohen and Cohen suggest that outliers are probably best left alone if they are fewer than one percent of N and not very extreme. Jacob Cohen and Patricia Cohen, *Applied Multiple Regression / Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences* 2d ed. (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1983), 128.

The values in the column, Partial, in Table 3 show the relative influence that each of the statistically significant variables has on Jazzdex when it is entered last into the equation[43] If we square the partial value for City Population, we find that 6.6 percent of the change in Jazzdex can be attributed to City Population when County Population and Story Source are already in the model. Adding each variable to the equation last, the influences on Jazzdex of the remaining variables are County Population (3.4 percent) and Story Source (3.4 percent).

Plugging the mean values of each of the main-effects into the equation, except for Story Source, controls for the values of City Population and County Population. Then the value of Story Source can be manipulated by solving for its possible values of 0 and 1 to determine what effect the model predicts. Controlling for the other main effects, the equation predicts that the Jazzdex score for newspaper editions where all four stories are local would be 0.8452. For newspaper editions where at least one of the stories is not local the score would be 1.8697, an increase in Jazzdex of 1.0245. The statistical evidence indicates that wire stories were a source of sensational news content.

The same method was used to predict values for the remaining variables in the equation. The value of Jazzdex increased by 0.052 for each additional 20,000 people as the population of the city increased. The value of Jazzdex declined by 0.062 for each additional 20,000 people the population of the county increased.

The regression model indicates that city population has the strongest influence on Jazzdex of the statistically significant variables and that its influence is in a positive direction. The model also indicates that the "jazzness" of newspapers tends to decline as the size of the county population increases. Finally, the model shows that stories that are nonlocal in origin or subject matter are more likely than local stories to fit the criteria for jazz journalism.

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[43] Cohen and Cohen, 88.

CONCLUSION

These findings cast doubt on the contention that jazz journalism began with the publication of the New York Illustrated Daily News, June 26, 1919, then spread from other tabloids to newspapers throughout the rest of the country. Most Missouri dailies seem not to have been strongly influenced by jazz journalism. By the measures used in this study, Missouri front pages changed little from 1920 to 1925 to 1929, except for a slight tendency to use photographs more frequently, which might be attributable to editors' growing acceptance of a technology that had been availabe since the end of the previous century. Greater differences in the "jazzness" of Missouri newspapers are accounted for by differing practices from city to city and newspaper to newspaper, than from differing years.

Factors that influenced the "jazzness" of newspapers included the populations of the city and county in which the newspaper was published and whether or not the stories in the study were local. City population and a nonlocal source for a story are positive influences on the level of "jazzness" in newspapers, while county population is a negative influence.

The finding that city population drives "jazzness" up and county population drives it down is seemingly contradictory. One explanation might be that the relative size of the counties where St. Louis and Kansas City are located is inversely correlated with the aggregated level of "jazzness" exhibited by newspapers from those cities. Kansas City, Mo., had a population about half the size of St. Louis during the 1920s. Yet, the city was situated in a county, Jackson, that had almost twice the population of St. Louis County. The two Kansas City papers that were sampled, the *Daily Democrat* and *Daily Journal*, had aggregated mean Jazzdex ratings from low to slightly above average, respectively

-1.28 to 0.43. The sampled St. Louis papers, the Globe-Democrat and Times were among the most sensational papers in the study, returning aggregated mean Jazzdex scores of 1.23 to 2.18 respectively. The effect of high Jazzdex newspapers being in a relatively large city situatied in a small county, and moderate to low Jazzdex newspapers being in a less populated city but a larger county population created a flip-flop effect.

Bent's argument from 1927 that syndicates carried sensationalism from large cities to small is supported by these findings. However, the effect is statistically very small, accounting for less than 7 percent of the variance in Jazzdex.

Four formal hypotheses, derived from historical accounts of newspaper journalism in the 1920s, were proposed about Missouri daily newspapers:

H_1: Jazz journalism was more prevalent in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

H_2: The sensational treatment of stories was more prevalent in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

H_3: Headline sizes were larger in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

H_4: Photograph sizes were larger in 1925 than in 1920 and 1929.

Statistical analysis showed that only H_4 can be accepted. Such a finding suggests that jazz journalism, as an historical construct, is not a wholly accurate representation of the design and content practices of newspapers in at least one state located away from the seaboard metropolitan newspapers.

This study does not prove that jazz journalism had no influence on Missouri newspaper front pages. Even though year to year changes in content and proportionate area of headlines were not statistically significant, papers in the state experienced a small but statistically significant increase in proportionate area of photographs during the decade.

Another finding was that Missouri cities with large populations tended to have higher levels of jazz journalism on their front pages than cities with small populations. Interestingly, the cities whose newspapers had the highest aggregate Jazzdex scores are port cities clustered along the Mississippi River on the eastern side of the state — Cape Girardeau (2.03), Carthage (1.96), St. Louis (1.61) and Hannibal (0.53).

Considered together, the three variables explained 10.8 percent of the variance in Jazzdex. That means that 89.2 percent of the reason for the St. Louis *Times*' Jazzdex rating of 2.18 and the Independence *Examiner*'s rating of -1.57 is still unexplained.

Bent's assertion was supported, but newspapers syndicating their stories to small papers explained only about one tenth of an otherwise dubious jazz journalism effect.

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FIGHTING FOR "THE BIG VOICES OF THE AIR": A HISTORY OF THE CLEAR CHANNEL BROADCASTING SERVICE

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ABSTRACT

FIGHTING FOR "THE BIG VOICES OF THE AIR": A HISTORY OF THE CLEAR CHANNEL BROADCASTING SERVICE

This paper is a historical study of the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service (CCBS), a trade group formed to represent clear channel AM broadcast stations. In examining the CCBS's operation from 1941 to 1968, the paper concentrates on the role of interest groups in the communications policy process. Using the organization's records, which include personal correspondence, material used to prepare legal briefs and internal memoranda, the study examines how the group used direct lobbying and coalition building to pursue its goals. Groups such as the CCBS are shown to play a pivotal role in the policymaking process through providing technical information and framing industry disputes. The study affirms the views of researchers who have noted that the regulatory process favors compromise solutions to problems. In this process, interest groups provide partisan proposals that form the basis of such compromises.

FIGHTING FOR "THE BIG VOICES OF THE AIR": A HISTORY OF THE CLEAR CHANNEL BROADCASTING SERVICE

"There is pride, profit and prestige in bigness," Elmer E. Smead wrote in his 1959 analysis of the radio industry. Station licensees wanted more power, Smead noted, because it was a way to reach a bigger audience and consequently increase profits.[1] During the medium's early years, the most prestigious AM broadcasters were the clear channel outlets, those stations authorized to use the highest power and granted exclusive use of their frequency at night. In 1962, Broadcasting magazine described their status:

> From 1930 to 1950—give or take a few years on either side—the clear channel stations reigned supreme. They were the big voices of the air. . . . [T]heir programs and commercials rang loud and clear during the day, and rose to a roar at night. . . . It was these stations that carried the most popular programs, the national advertising—both network and national spot—that brought to the 25 million listeners in rural America their only nighttime service.[2]

The clear channel stations' transmitting power was accompanied by a powerful trade organization, the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service (CCBS). Formed in 1941, the CCBS maintained a Washington, D.C., office and employed a full-time director who oversaw the group's effort to preserve and enhance the power of clear channel stations through lobbying and public education. The CCBS's activities led Llewellyn White, in his 1947 book, The American Radio, to call the group "The most powerful radio lobby in the capital." The CCBS, White maintained, had "done more than all other groups combined to maintain the status quo among clear channel plum-holders."[3] In 1949, Democratic Senator Edwin Johnson of Colorado called the group "a well entrenched, well financed, well staffed group who are determined to have radio control in the United States."[4]

For the past half century or more, American political science has been largely defined through the study of groups.[5] Since David B. Truman's 1951 work The Governmental Process, group politics has been examined within a pluralist framework in which various interest groups compete for power and favors from the government.[6] Thus, understanding how interest groups function is essential to understanding the political process.

Despite this concentration on interest groups, there have been far fewer empirical studies of particular organizations. R. Douglas Arnold contended in 1982 that the area of interest group study was "theory rich and data poor" and called for more empirical studies of how groups function.[7] With a handful of notable exceptions, most work up to that time had concentrated on the theoretical study of groups as a whole, rather than examining the operation of particular organizations.[8] Although the call of Arnold and others for more empirical work has begun to be heeded, scholars acknowledge that this area still needs work.[9]

Communications scholars have largely neglected the study of interest groups in the media business. Although interest groups are acknowledged as an important force in the development of communications policy,[10] few studies examine precisely how groups influence the process. David R. Mackey's 1957 study of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) was a step in this direction, but it has not been followed upon by subsequent researchers.[11] Recently, studies of emerging policy struggles involving Direct Broadcast Satellites and Telco/Cable Cross-ownership have acknowledged the importance of competing interest groups.[12] Clearly, the existing literature demonstrates that interest groups play a significant role in the development of communications policy, yet the manner in which groups pursue and achieve their particular goals has not been examined.

This study seeks to begin a discourse on this neglected area by examining the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service. A historical study informed by existing research on the political, social and economic role of interest groups, it seeks to build our understanding of how interest groups function in the policy process. To that end, the study will chronicle the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service from its inception in 1941 until 1968, the year the group closed its Washington, D.C., office due to budget constraints. Within this time period, the study concentrates on how the group used direct lobbying, grass-roots mobilization and coalition building to pursue its goals.

The chief sources for this study are the documents of the CCBS, which have never before been accessed by a researcher. The material, which includes correspondence, internal memoranda, meeting minutes and material for the preparation of legal briefs and testimony, allows the study to present a detailed view of how the group operated. In addition, several key players in the operation of the CCBS were interviewed.

Interest Group Functions

Researchers have identified several broad categories of activities performed by interest groups: direct lobbying, participating in political campaigns, litigating, raising money, forming coalitions and mobilizing grass roots support.[13] During the time of this study, the only categories that the CCBS engaged in to a significant degree were direct lobbying, forming coalitions and mobilizing grass-roots support. In fact, as will be seen, the CCBS's efforts at forming coalitions and mobilizing grass roots support were largely one and the same, concentrating on building alliances with farm organizations to spur local activity.

Direct Lobbying. The most traditional form of political persuasion, direct lobbying involves personal contact of a government official by a person or persons representing the interest group. This persuasion may be in the form of a telephone call, an impromptu conversation, a formal meeting, a letter or some other type of communication. The government official may be a member of Congress, a regulatory agency commissioner, the president or a subordinate of any of these.

The policy process is practically inseparable from the direct lobbying function of interest groups, especially at the regulatory agencies. Since regulatory agencies tend to deal with very specialized issues, they come to rely on interest groups to provide the highly technical and often esoteric information crucial to the process of policymaking. "At its heart," Jeffrey M. Berry contends, "regulatory lobbying is a process of interest groups bringing their data to policy makers and trying to make these data the information base from which decisions flow."[14] The agency often formalizes this relationship by sanctioning advisory committees made up of members of various interest groups.[15]

The dependence of regulatory agencies on industry special interest groups has led many researchers to assert that the agencies are in reality "captured" by these special interests. Capture theory contends that regulatory agencies, created by vague public service mandates, tend to become little more than prisoners of special interest groups, functioning for the benefit of the industry they are supposed to control.[16] The so-called "revolving door" of industry and government personnel lends credence to the idea that agencies are too close to the industries they are entrusted to regulate. In many cases, regulatory personnel used to work in the industry, or perhaps hope to work in it in the future. At the same time, lobbyists may be former government officials themselves. Thus, the relationships between

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lobbyists and government officials often form a complex web that is difficult to untangle.[17]

Some, however, take a less suspicious view of the relationship between the regulators and the regulated. They see the close relationship between the industry and government—both at the institutional and personal level—as leading to more informed policy through adding new perspectives to the debate.[18] These perspectives, naturally, depend on the existence of a variety of groups representing different interests.

Grass Roots Support and Coalition Building. Much of the CCBS's effort to mobilize grass roots support for its cause went through farm groups, which were in a unique position to both reach a large constituency and exert considerable direct lobbying power. The importance of such "inside-outside" strategies is acknowledged in the interest group literature as a way to increase political clout.[19] Not only do interest groups pressure government officials directly, they create the notion of broad-based support for their positions by rallying the public to contact government officials. Coalition forming of this type is common among interest groups.[20]

The CCBS: Chronology of an Interest Group

Clear Channel Origins. The concept of clear channels was first formalized in the Federal Radio Commission's (FRC) 1928 frequency allocation table. Under that plan, forty frequencies in the nascent AM broadcast band were reserved for high-power stations with exclusive use of the frequency at night.[21] This exclusivity was important because the physics of the AM broadcasting band allow signals to travel long distances at night—perhaps hundreds or thousands of miles—but only if the frequency is clear of other stations. Thus, in an effort to facilitate radio service to distant rural locations, the FRC reserved these frequencies for what would come to be called the "clear channel" stations. While some smaller stations were allowed to broadcast on clear channel frequencies during daylight hours, they were forced to sign off at night in order to avoid interfering with the dominant station's signal. This basic allocation plan was retained when the FRC became the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 1934.

That same year, Cincinnati's WLW clear channel station began broadcasting experimentally with 500,000 watts of power, ten times the normal limit. The FRC had endorsed the plan in order to study how higher power might benefit rural coverage. From an engineering standpoint at least, it seemed that more power meant better coverage. In a 1935 survey, rural listeners in thirteen states from Michigan to Florida tapped the high-power WLW as their first choice in radio programming.[22] Soon other clear channel stations were lining up for the so-called "superpower" as well.[23]

But these events helped crystallize opponents' views that clear channel stations had an unfair advantage to begin with. Operators of smaller stations said that rural areas could be better served by adding new stations on what were now clear frequencies. Attacked as monopolies of the public trust, clear channel stations soon found vocal opponents in Congress, notably Montana's Democrat Senator Burton K. Wheeler, who in 1938 pushed through a resolution recommending that broadcast stations be limited to 50,000 watts.[24] Although the resolution did not carry the force of law, the FCC responded by denying the existing applications for superpower and ending WLW's experimental authorization in 1939.[25]

The battle lines in the clear channel debate were thus drawn: clear channel proponents called for increased power and preservation of nighttime exclusivity as the best way to serve the vast rural areas of the country, while opponents called for the "duplication" of clear channels with more stations. Each side supported its arguments through the use of legal and ideological symbols, a tendency noted by Erwin G. Krasnow and Lawrence D. Longley.[26] Supporters of the clear channels called them a "valuable natural resource," and cited their value to farmers and potential for communication in times of war; opponents charged that the clear channel stations were "monopolies of the public trust," and asked the FCC to promote localism by adding new stations in small communities on the clear channels. Both sides claimed their chief concern was providing service to the rural public.

Docket 6741. The FCC had announced its plan to resolve the long-running clear channel dispute in 1941, but the United States' entry into World War II delayed action until 1945. At that time, the commission initiated Docket 6741, which came to be known as the "clear channel case," hoping to have the matter resolved in a few months. However, Docket 6741 ended up dragging on for more than sixteen years.

No one wanted a resolution of the clear channel issue more than the CCBS, which had formed early in 1941. The brainchild of WSM Nashville's Edwin Craig, the CCBS hired Vic Sholis, the former public relations chief of the Department of Commerce, as director and Louis Caldwell, a former general counsel for the Federal Radio Commission, as chief legal counsel. Caldwell, who was acknowledged by many in the industry to be the foremost authority on communications law, was one of many players in the clear channel debate who had ties to regulatory agencies.[27]

The CCBS allowed any non-network owned clear channel station to join, and sixteen of the seventeen eligible stations did.[28] By this time, only 25 of the originally reserved clear channels remained clear; the others had been duplicated with the consent of individual clear channel stations. CCBS member stations paid annual dues based on their advertising rates, and at times the group levied additional assessments to pay for specific expenses. Financial records showing exact station contributions are not available for the group's early years, although Llewellyn White asserted in 1948 that each station was contributing $10,000 annually.[29]

Throughout the Docket 6741 proceeding, the CCBS functioned as both an information provider and partisan advocate. Performing these same functions from an anti-clear channel perspective were various other groups, including the Regional Broadcasters Committee (RBC), Daytime Broadcasters Association (DBA) and the Association for Broadcasting Standards, Inc. (ABS). Although these groups were not as well organized as the CCBS and did not last as long, they had the advantage of greater membership. Since there were more local and regional stations than clear channel stations, such groups could often claim a member in nearly every Congressional district. "They were tremendously effective," Roy Battles, CCBS director from 1961 to 1968, later said. "[They would] whoop it up among their members and tell them to get on their congressmen about this and tell their congressmen how terrible [clear channels were] and how it was against the public interest."[30]

One of the FCC's first acts after announcing the opening of Docket 6741 was to form four industry-government committees to collect data for the hearings. These committees included members from the FCC and various industry groups, including the CCBS.[31]

Throughout the proceeding, CCBS representatives regularly met with FCC personnel, especially engineers, to discuss the clear channel issue.[32] Such meetings, especially with mid-level agency personnel, are common among interest groups.[33]

The policymaking process in the clear channel issue was clearly a collaborative effort between the FCC and interest groups. While formal hearings were held at various times during the 1940s and 1950s, there were also many ex parte contacts between commission personnel and interest group representatives. For instance, after CBS had presented a plan to solve the rural coverage problem with 200 FM stations and two million-watt AM stations,[34] CCBS engineers held a private meeting with commissioners Charles Denny and Ewell K. Jett. The commissioners urged the CCBS to assemble a specific plan for providing rural coverage, with Denny suggesting that the group forward an "ideal plan" that could be "worked down" to the best practical application.[35] The result was the CCBS's so-called "Twenty Station Plan," which would have given the sixteen CCBS members and four other stations 750,000 watts of power each.[36] The plan served a purpose both for the CCBS, which showed that high power clear channel stations could increase rural coverage, and for the commission, which now had additional engineering studies and another solution from which to choose.

Building the Farm Alliance. The alliance between farm groups and the CCBS initially made sense for both sides. Farmers depended on radio for weather, news, entertainment and market information, and since most of them lived in isolated rural areas, they were served by clear channel radio stations. Clear channel stations obliged the farm audience to a degree, providing some programming aimed directly at rural listeners. The CCBS, in return, sought the support of groups such as the American Farm Bureau Federation, National Grange, National Council of Farmers Cooperatives and National Farmers Union who wielded considerable lobbying power in postwar politics.[37]

Despite the common interests shared by the two groups, however, the CCBS-farm alliance did not naturally form but rather came together as a result of the CCBS's prodding. This is shown by the fact that at the FCC's initial round of hearings on Docket 6741 in 1946 the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, National Grange and National Farmers Union testified against clear channel stations. Following this poor showing, the CCBS began to concentrate both on improving member stations' farm programming and persuading farm groups to favor clear channels. "Programming for farmers and small town listeners has become a major question in the hearings," Sholis told members. "I can't overemphasize to you the importance of making as strong and effective a case as possible."[38] The new emphasis on farm programming was not lost on James G. Patton of the Farmers Educational Cooperative Union of America who later testified:

> It must be said that since the FCC has begun its investigations of the rural service of clear channel stations there has been a decided improvement in their farm broadcasts. . . . I am not sure that this improved service will continue once the FCC has rendered a final decision on clear facilities.[39]

The farm groups usually obliged the CCBS throughout the 1940s and 1950s, with the notable exception of the National Farmers Union, which opposed the CCBS until the early 1960s.[40] Farm representatives testified at the FCC clear channel hearings during the mid to late 1940s and before Congressional hearings in 1948 and 1962.[41] In addition, the CCBS organized numerous letter writing campaigns through farm organizations and encouraged farm groups to pass pro-clear channel resolutions at national and local conventions.

The CCBS, in return, urged member stations to increase coverage of farm events, and encouraged clear channel farm directors to promote a dialogue with local farm organizations. "In these conversations," the group instructed, "our aim is not only to familiarize these leaders with the Clear Channel story, but also to convert them to the cause to the end that they will be willing to carry explanatory articles in their organization's publication."[42]

The Johnson Hearings. The FCC ordered the record closed on Docket 6741 in January 1948, and announced its intention to reach a decision by May. Commission engineers were instructed to draw up three plans: a twenty-two-station superpower plan similar to the CCBS proposal, an eighteen-station superpower plan accompanied by duplications of network-owned clear channel stations, and duplication of all clear channels.[43] However, on February 26, 1948, Senator Edwin Johnson, a Democrat from Colorado, introduced a bill to duplicate the clear channels and limit their power to 50,000 watts. The chairman of the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, Charles Tobey, asked FCC chairman Wayne Coy to delay action on Docket 6741 until the committee could hold hearings. Coy reluctantly agreed.[44]

CCBS member stations were encouraged to write letters to members of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, spelling out the value of clear channels and encouraging the Senate to leave such a technically complicated issue in the hands of the FCC. The CCBS provided a sample letter, and also some tips on issues to raise in personal contacts with Committee members: "Whatever the merits of the issue, Congress set up the FCC as an expert tribunal to decide such matters. Congress should refrain from interfering with the Commission's functions in making a decision after having heard all the evidence."[45]

In addressing the latter topic, stations were warned that the argument should be "phrased in diplomatic terms" to avoid the appearance of questioning the Senate's authority.
"Unquestionably Congress has the right to enact such a bill as the Johnson Bill," Caldwell wrote, "the only question is as to the wisdom and justice of doing so."[46]

Throughout preparation for the hearings, Caldwell had talked several times to the committee's secretary, trying to gauge the feelings of committee members. He told members these conversations were "disturbing": "They indicate, I am afraid, that arrangements for the hearing are being made more with an eye to staging a demonstration against clear channels than for the purpose of ascertaining the facts."[47] The group representing regional stations also was lobbying Congress and succeeding in getting support for the bill to what Caldwell called "an alarming degree." "The situation is getting worse than critical," he told members. "We need every bit of help you can give us."[48] The week before the hearings were to commence, however, Caldwell learned that most of the members of the Committee were against the bill.[49] Once the hearings got under way, the CCBS and opposing groups presented what was essentially a ten-day replay of the past three years of FCC hearings. Congress adjourned before the Senate took any further action on the matter.

Following the Johnson hearings, which represented the CCBS's first large-scale mobilization on Capitol Hill, the group began to place more emphasis on Congressional activities. Sholis had resigned as director of the group in 1947 to take a job at clear channel WHAS in Louisville, and he was succeeded by Ward Quaal, Assistant to the General Manager at Chicago's WGN clear channel station. As director, Quaal placed more emphasis on programming matters. He set up a program that carried messages from local congressmen at least twice a month on clear channel stations, and he established news services for individual congressmen. "They all had more exposure at home than they ever had before," he later said.[50] He also organized a clearinghouse for the exchange of farm programming between member stations, and at the 1952 Democratic and Republican conventions he set up a pool system for CCBS stations. With four studios at Chicago's International Amphitheater and two more at the Hilton Hotel, the CCBS service offered member stations live reports and taping facilities.[51]

The Docket 6741 Decision. Although the Johnson hearings did not result in any anti-clear channel legislation, the delay they caused placed the issue on the FCC's back burner throughout most of the 1950s. Despite CCBS efforts to focus the FCC's attention back on the clear channel issue, including occasional letter writing campaigns organized through farm organizations,[52] the commission now had other issues—notably FM radio and television—to consider.

Finally, in 1958, the FCC proposed duplicating 12 clear channels. On five of these channels, the existing clear channel stations would have to install new antenna systems to "directionalize" their signals in order to avoid interfering with the new stations. The CCBS vigorously opposed this plan, citing inordinate expense for existing stations and the creation of new unserved rural areas.[53] The FCC quickly backed away from the plan, and in 1959 invited comments on a proposal to assign new stations on 23 clear channels, without directionalization requirements for existing stations. Not surprisingly, the CCBS opposed this plan as well.

In 1961 the FCC closed Docket 6741 with a compromise decision to duplicate thirteen of the remaining 25 clear channels. The issue of superpower on the remaining channels was "left to further study," with the FCC admitting deference to the 1938 Senate resolution against higher power.[54] Although the duplicated frequencies included only five held by CCBS members, the group still felt it had to fight the decision because of the precedent it was setting. "CCBS plans to reverse this FCC rape of a valuable natural resource," said a memo sent to stations.[55]

The FCC decision put the CCBS in the somewhat ironic position of having to look to Congress for relief. Thus the group, which thirteen years earlier had asserted that radio regulation was the province of the FCC and not Congress, would now seek legislation in Congress to repeal the FCC's decision. By this time, the group had a new director, Roy Battles, who previously had worked for the National Grange. Battles mobilized CCBS forces after the FCC decision, noting that the group's greatest task was to "dispel the notion that clear channels are a privileged group." He called CCBS station managers to Washington for a meeting at the beginning of 1962 and encouraged them to meet with their Congressmen before returning home.[56]

By February 1962, four bills had been introduced in the House of Representatives opposing the FCC's clear channel decision. Two of them authorized higher power on clear channel stations, while the other two merely prohibited duplication.[57] Hearings on the bills became essentially a show and tell session for the clear channels, as there was no organized opposition to any of them.

The CCBS kept in contact with all the members of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, and WJR in Detroit under Vice President and General Manager James Quello (who later became FCC chairman) was especially close to Democratic Representative John Dingell and Republican John Bennett. In a telephone conversation with Battles, Dingell said the key was overcoming the sympathy in Congress for small station operators.[58] To that end, both Dingell and Bennett sent letters to all of the members of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce after the hearings, outlining the case for retaining the clear channels and granting superpower. At the same time, Battles was telling CCBS members to start "thinking how you can secure a Yes vote from as many Congressmen as possible."[59]

Dingell's H.R. 8210 was passed by the Commerce Committee, but did not come to a vote on the House floor. Fearing that the Senate would not act even if the House did pass a bill, Dingell and other clear channel proponents on the Commerce Committee replaced H.R. 8210 with a House resolution, H.Res 714.[60] The resolution, which, like the Senate's 1938 resolution would not be law, authorized the FCC to grant power in excess of 50,000 watts to stations that could improve rural coverage and asked the commission not to act on its Docket 6741 decision for one year after the resolution's passage.[61] H.Res 714 passed the House on July 7, 1962, and Battles bragged that the CCBS had essentially written the text of the resolution. "Language guidelines for the legislation, which were developed by the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, followed in principle and in part language approved at the April 1, 1962, CCBS annual meeting held in Chicago," he wrote.[62]

Battles tried to get a similar resolution passed by the Senate, but said the group "didn't have enough political whack" to do so.[63] Nonetheless, there was now a Congressional resolution to "cancel out" the 1938 Senate resolution, and CCBS member stations began applying for higher power authorization. The FCC affirmed its decision on Docket 6741 in November 1962, but agreed to postpone implementing the decision until the July 2, 1963 date requested by H.Res. 714. If Congress did not pass more forceful legislation by that time, the commission said, it would begin assigning additional stations on the designated clear channels. At the same time, the FCC dismissed the nine pending superpower applications from clear channel stations.[64] The one year delay came and went, and the CCBS was unable to get any additional legislation through Congress. The first clear channel duplications were approved in 1964.

The CCBS in Decline. During the 1950s, the group's budget had decreased as the FCC was largely dormant on the clear channel issue. By the 1960s, the CCBS was working on an annual budget of about $60,000. Stations continued the system of paying dues based on their hourly advertising rates with a maximum yearly assessment of $7,000. But by the end of 1967, the group, facing legal fees and other costs that were far outstripping its budget, voted to raise the annual budget to $80,000.[65]

Some member stations had already begun to flinch at the cost of CCBS membership, and the group lost five members during the 1960s. By this time, the economic and social climate had changed to the point that most clear channel stations no longer desired superpower, and fighting the Docket 6741 decision had proven to be futile. With the advent of television, there were no longer enough national advertisers available to radio stations to support an increased coverage area, and many clear channel stations had begun dropping rural programming in favor of serving the newly sprawling suburbs. By the middle of the decade, Battles realized many clear channel stations no longer shared his interest in the farmer, dropping rural programming or relegating it to odd hours. "Without getting into the merits or demerits of the above trends, the question comes up very clearly," he wrote a colleague. "How long can we expect enthusiastic agricultural support for CCBS positions in this climate?"[66]

In early 1968, the group's most famous member, WLW, pulled out. Despite efforts to persuade the station's owner, the AVCO Corporation, to stay in the group, it refused. Facing either a substantial deterioration in budget or a substantial increase in dues for the remaining members, the group held a special meeting in June and decided to close the Washington, D.C., office.[67]

The CCBS continues to operate to this day, but in a much more informal manner. It no longer has an office, and its director does not even collect a salary.[68] By now, the fundamental issues relating to clear channels have been settled: in 1980 the FCC decided to duplicate the remaining clear channels, finally bringing to a close an issue that had been debated for nearly half a century.[69]

In reality, the FCC decisions in 1961 and 1980 in many ways merely cemented the status quo. Although new stations were added to clear channel frequencies, the dominant stations retained protection of their nighttime signals to approximately 700 miles. This was essentially the area a station could reasonably serve with 50,000 watts anyway, so in effect the clear channels did not lose anything. Clear channel stations could no longer hope to increase their power or coverage area, but their signals would be protected to a greater degree than any other AM broadcasters.

Conclusion

The examination of the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service's operation over nearly three decades reveals much about the process of communications policymaking. In this process, interest groups play a central role, providing information, technical expertise and an indication of public support for their positions.

The clear channel debate played out in both the regulatory and legislative forums, and interest groups adapted to each. At times, such as during the 1948 Johnson hearings, the CCBS was reactive, responding to the change in venue from the FCC to Congress. At other times, such as after the FCC's Docket 6741 decision, the CCBS was proactive, pushing the debate into a new forum. In this way, interest groups attempt to play one branch of government off another to attempt to win favorable policy.

In the end, the clear channel debate was settled within the regulatory arena, but the regulatory agency continually had one eye on Congress. Horwitz and others have asserted that regulatory agencies are constantly battling threats to their autonomy that come from the industry and other branches of government. "[T]he agency seeks to avoid conflict," Horwitz notes, "for conflict threatens the autonomy of an organization situated amidst a sea of pressures and challenges to its authority." [70] The result is that regulatory agencies rarely produce innovative policy, but rather engineer compromises between conflicting industry groups, or what Krasnow and Longley call "mutual accommodation among participants."[71]

The FCC depends on industry groups to provide information and undertake engineering studies, so it is not surprising that the commission defers to the industry. While the clear channel case did not indicate that the FCC was "captured" by the industry, it did show that problems and solutions were discussed in terms set by the industry groups. The FCC invited this type of agenda setting, urging interest groups to assemble ideal plans that could be negotiated to more moderate positions. When the commission put forth a proposal that would have fundamentally upset the status quo by forcing clear channel stations to invest in expensive directional antennas, for instance, it was forced to quickly back away. In the end, the FCC successfully pursued a middle ground solution, in essence cementing the status quo.

The CCBS's ultimate function, then, was to be sure its interests were represented in the pluralist politics of policymaking. By using direct lobbying and coalition building to mobilize grass roots support, the CCBS was able to keep its views before the FCC and Congress. While the CCBS did not get everything it wanted, it is likely that the status of the clear channel stations would have been much worse had the CCBS not established and maintained a presence in the policymaking process.

One need only look as far as the recent battles over new telecommunications legislation to see the results of interest groups in the policy process. It is likely scholars will be examining the results of this new legislation for many years to come, and with good reason. But in this future work, researchers should acknowledge the functioning of interest groups, not only in what ends they achieve, but in how they pursued them.

NOTES

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[2] "Clears Tops for 20 Years," Broadcasting, October 15, 1962, 29.

[3] Llewellyn White, The American Radio: A Report on the Broadcasting Industry in the United States from the Commission on Freedom of the Press (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1977), 148.

[4] Ed Keys, "Johnson Prods Anti-Clears," Broadcasting, January 31, 1949, 22.

[5] See Jeffrey M. Berry, The Interest Group Society (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), 4; and Mark P. Petracca, The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1992), 4.

[6] David B. Truman, The Governmental Process (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), 15-17.

[7] R. Douglas Arnold, "Overtilled and Undertilled Fields in American Politics," Political Science Quarterly 97 (1982): 97.

[8] These exceptions include Lester W. Milbrath, The Washington Lobbyists (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1963); Raymond Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool and Anthony Dexter, American Business and Public Policy (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1963); Kay Lehman Schlozman and John T. Tierney, Organized Interests and American Democracy (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986); and Jack L. Walker, "The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America," The American Political Science Review 77 (1983): 390-406.

[9] See Philip A. Mundo, Interest Groups: Cases and Characteristics (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1992), 18; and Petracca, The Politics of Interest, 363.

[10] See Robert W. McChesney, Telecommunications, Mass Media and Democracy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Robert Britt Horwitz, The Irony of Regulatory Reform: The Deregulation of American Telecommunications (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Vincent Mosco, Broadcasting in the United States: Innovative Challenge and Critical Control (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1979); Erwin G. Krasnow and Lawrence D. Longley, The Politics of Broadcast Regulation (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978); and Don R. Le Duc, Cable Television and the

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[11] David R. Mackey, "The Development of the National Association of Broadcasters," Journal of Broadcasting 4 (Fall 1957): 309-325.

[12] See Haeryon Kim, "The Politics of Deregulation: Public Participation in the FCC Rulemaking Process for DBS," Telecommunications Policy 19(January/February 1995): 51-60; and Thomas W. Hazlett, "Rent-Seeking in the Telco/Cable Cross-Ownership Controversy," Telecommunications Policy 14(October 1990): 425-433.

[13] See Petracca, The Politics of Interest, 18; Berry, The Interest Group Society, 6; and Charles S. Mack, Lobbying and Government Relations: A Guide for Executives (New York: Quorum Books, 1989), 54-5.

[14] Berry, The Interest Group Society, 36.

[15] Schlozman and Tierney, Organized Interests and American Democracy, 334.

[16] Horwitz, The Irony of Regulatory Reform, 29.

[17] See Krasnow and Longley, The Politics of Broadcast Regulation, 38; Berry, The Interest Group Society, 126; and Robert H. Salisbury and Paul Johnson, "Who You Know Versus What You Know: The Uses of Government Experience for Washington Lobbyists," American Journal of Political Science 33(February 1989): 175-195.

[18] See Roger G. Noll and Bruce M. Owen, The Political Economy of Deregulation: Interest Groups in the Regulatory Process (Washington: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy, 1983), 26; and Jane J. Mansbridge, "A Deliberative Theory of Interest Representation," in Petracca, The Politics of Interest, 32-35.

[19] Philip A Mundo, Interest Groups, 11.

[20] Berry, The Interest Group Society, 202-5.

[21] For discussion of the development of clear channel policy, see Lawrence W. Lichty, The Nation's Station: A History of Station WLW (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 1964); George Harry Rogers, The History of the Clear Channel and Super Power Controversy in the Management of the Standard Broadcast Allocation Plan (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Utah, 1972); Eric F. Brown, Nighttime Radio for the Nation: A History of the Clear Channel Proceeding, 1945-1972 (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio

University, 1975); and Jeffrey Smulyan, "Power to Some People: The FCC's Clear Channel Allocation Policy," Southern California Law Review 44 (1971): 811.

[22] Federal Communications Commission, FCC Reports (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936), 61.

[23] "WGY, KSL Apply for 500,000 Watts," Broadcasting, October 15, 1936, 64.

[24] Congressional Record, 75th Congress, 3rd Session (1938), 8585.

[25] Federal Communications Commission, In the Matter of the Application of the Crosley Corporation, 6 FCC 797 (1939).

[26] Krasnow and Longley, The Politics of Broadcast Regulation, 102.

[27] "Death of Louis G. Caldwell," Journal of the Federal Communications Bar Association 12 (Spring 1952): 60-1.

[28] "Clear Channel Members Sign All But One Outlet," Broadcasting, April 21, 1941, 10. The lone holdout was KSL in Salt Lake City, which eventually joined the group as well.

[29] White, The American Radio, 148.

[30] Roy Battles, telephone interview by author, January 5, 1994.

[31] See "Meeting Minutes," June 14, 1945, Box 1696, Wiley, Rein and Fielding Law Offices (Hereafter referred to as WRF Files); and "May 9 Is Definite Clear Channel Date," Broadcasting, March 26, 1945, 13.

[32] CCBS Memo, May 14, 1947, Box 1696, WRF Files.

[33] Schlozman and Tierney, Organized Interests and American Democracy, 331.

[34] See Rufus Crater, "Sharp Disputes Mark Clear Hearing," Broadcasting, November 3, 1947, 18; and Memo to Engineers of the Clear Channel Broadcasting Service, June 21, 1946, Box 1700, WRF Files.

[35] Memo to Engineers, June 21, 1946.

[36] "Outline of Case for High Power," 1946, Box 1697, WRF Files.

[37] Anthony J. Badger, The New Deal: The Depression Years, 1933-1940 (New York: The Noonday Press, 1989), 147.

[38] CCBS to Members, February 23, 1946, Box 1696, WRF Files.

[39] U.S. Senate, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, To Limit the Power of Radio Broadcast Stations (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 882.

[40] Battles to Eagan, April 5, 1962, Box A405, WRF Files.

[41] See Jack Levy, "Clear Channel Decision Seen by Fall," Broadcasting, April 22, 1946, 18; U.S. Senate, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, To Limit the Power of Radio Broadcast Stations (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948); and U.S. House, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Clear Channel Broadcasting Stations, 87th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962).

[42]. "Memo on Meeting of Clear Channel Farm Directors with Vic Sholis," April 19, 1941, Box 1696, WRF Files.

[43] Brown, Nighttime Radio for the Nation, 51.

[44] U.S. Senate, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, To Limit Power of Radio Broadcast Stations, 2-5.

[45] Memorandum on Johnson Bill, nd., Box 1697, WRF Files.

[46] See "Memorandum on Johnson Bill," nd., and "Memorandum No. 2," nd., both in Box 1697, WRF Files.

[47] "Memorandum No. 2," March 17, 1948, Box 1697, WRF Files.

[48] "Memorandum No. 6," March 23, 1948, Box 1697, WRF Files.

[49] "Memorandum No. 7," May 5, 1948, Box 1697, WRF Files.

[50] Ward Quaal, telephone interview by author, January 5, 1994.

[51] See Ward Quaal, telephone interview by author, January 5, 1994; and "The Chicago Political Show is About Under Way," Broadcasting, June 30, 1952, 25.

[52] Battles to CCBS Members, June 26, 1954, Box 2424, WRF Files.

[53] See Federal Communications Commission, In the Matter of Clear Channel Broadcasting in the Standard Broadcasting Band, 31 FCC 570 (1961); and Smulyan, "Power to Some People," 829.

[54] Federal Communications Commission, In the Matter of Clear Channel Broadcasting in the Standard Broadcasting Band, 31 FCC 571-573 (1961).

[55] Minutes, CCBS Farm Directors Meeting, November 24, 1961, Box 2916, WRF Files.

[56] Battles to Quaal, October 31, 1961, Box A401, WRF Files.

[57] U.S. House, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, Clear Channel Broadcasting Stations, 87th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), 1-2.

[58] Battles to Quello, November 15, 1961, Box A401, WRF Files.

[59] "Bulletin No. 9," May 9, 1962, Box A401, WRF Files.

[60] See Brown, Nighttime Radio for the Nation, 120.

[61] Congressional Record, 87th Congress, 2d Session (1962), 11678.

[62] Battles to Craig, July 24, 1962, Box A401, WRF Files.

[63] Roy Battles, interview by Eric F. Brown, Washington, D.C., June, 1972.

[64] See Brown, Nighttime Radio for the Nation, 123-5; and Battles to Craig, January 4, 1963, Box A401, WRF Files.

[65] "Meeting Minutes," October 5, 1967, Box A014, WRF Files.

[66] See Battles to Eagan, March 3, 1966, Box A406, WRF Files; and Quaal to Battles, May 23, 1962, Box A401, WRF Files.

[67] "Memorandum," July 8, 1968, Box A401, WRF Files.

[68] Wayne Vriesmann, telephone interview by author, March 3, 1994.

[69] Federal Communications Commission, In the Matter of Clear Channel Broadcasting in the Standard Broadcast Band, 78 FCC 2d 1346-7 (1980).

[70] Horwitz, The Irony of Regulatory Reform, 85-6.

[71] Krasnow and Longley, The Politics of Broadcast Regulation, 102.

RURAL PUBLICITY IN THE BOILERPLATE ERA:
THE MT. CLEMENS NEWS BUREAU

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ABSTRACT

RURAL PUBLICITY IN THE BOILERPLATE ERA:
THE MT. CLEMENS NEWS BUREAU

In 1916, Henry Ford sued the Chicago Tribune for libel for printing an editorial calling him an "anarchist" and "ignorant idealist." The case came to trial during the summer of 1919 in Mt. Clemens, Michigan. During the trial, Ford operated the Mt. Clemens News Bureau, which provided wired dispatches and boilerplate to small newspapers that could not send correspondents to the trial. Ford pledged that the bureau would print "the uncolored truth," but in reality it was a thinly-disguised publicity effort. More than 3,000 weekly papers and 100 daily papers subscribed to the service, which was provided free of charge. After the trial, in which the jury found the Tribune guilty of libeling Ford but awarded him only six cents in damages, the news bureau continued to operate briefly, publicizing Ford and other causes. The paper examines how the news bureau was representative of rural publicity efforts that have been overlooked by communications historians.

RURAL PUBLICITY IN THE BOILERPLATE ERA: THE MT. CLEMENS NEWS BUREAU

Henry Ford spent part of the summer of 1919 in Mt. Clemens, a small suburb northeast of Detroit. He was suing the Chicago Tribune for libel after the paper had called him an "anarchist" and "ignorant idealist" in 1916. Following much legal wrangling, the case was moved to Mt. Clemens as a compromise between Ford lawyers who wanted it in Detroit and Tribune lawyers who wanted it in Chicago. It was thus that the world's most famous carmaker, his entourage, reporters and teams of lawyers descended on the sleepy small town previously known only for its rubdown spas.[1]

David L. Lewis called the trial "perhaps the most publicized court case in American history prior to the Scopes trial of 1925."[2] Ford himself did much to make this so, setting up his own news agency to cover the trial. The Mt. Clemens News Bureau, an arm of Ford's recently acquired weekly magazine, the Dearborn Independent, supplied news releases and ready-to-print full column boilerplate to nearly 3,500 newspapers.[3] Forum magazine called the news bureau "the biggest publicity stunt for ideas that the world has ever seen."[4]

The news bureau continued to function even after the jury rendered a verdict in August 1919. Its most notable activity in the months following the trial was covering

President Woodrow Wilson's nationwide speaking tour in support of the League of Nations. But Ford and his associates eventually tired of funding the bureau, believing the Dearborn Independent provided a more effective way of getting the carmaker's views before the public.

Many biographies of Ford have been written, and most discuss his forays into publicity at some length.[5] However, in addressing the Mt. Clemens News Bureau, these works tend to concentrate on the trial itself rather than the operation of the news bureau. Thus, the service, which represents an important example of early rural public relations, is portrayed as merely a sidelight to the sensational trial. Histories of public relations also have ignored Ford's promotional effort at Mt. Clemens.[6]

This paper chronicles the creation and operation of the Mt. Clemens News Bureau during 1919 and 1920. In so doing, it concentrates on aspects of the bureau's operation that were indicative of larger themes in the relationship between public relations and newspapers in the early twentieth century. The paper examines how Ford's service, which was touted as "news," was in reality biased coverage designed to enhance the carmaker's image and promote his views. In addition, the paper shows how the publicity effort was beneficial not only to Ford but to rural editors, who welcomed the pre-produced material. For this reason, Ford's news bureau—

and similar publicity efforts—were able to systematically "buy" coverage in a large number of rural newspapers. While most historical accounts of the early rise of press agentry and public relations have concentrated on how coverage was secured in large newspapers and national media, this study shows that the rural newspapers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were fertile ground for large-scale publicity efforts.

Publicity and the Birth of Corporate Public Relations

The roots of modern public relations are normally traced to the post-Civil War years of the nineteenth century. During that time press agents, who specialized in securing favorable newspaper coverage for their clients, began to appear. William Cody, who launched a career as "Buffalo Bill" and P.T. Barnum, whose circus became known as "The Greatest Show on Earth," both relied heavily on press agents to create their images. At the same time, corporate and governmental press agents were pursuing coverage in a less visible—but equally effective—manner.[7]

Railroads were the leaders in early press agentry. Marvin N. Olasky's 1987 study noted that railroads used the press to rally support for government regulation in the 1880s. Such regulation, the railroads reasoned, would prevent increased competition and decreases in shipping rates.

But to build support for the idea, railroads had to portray regulation as in the "public interest." To that end, they hired press agents, promoted pro-regulation scholarship in academia and used in-house press agents to write and place articles and editorials.[8]

The 1896 presidential campaign marked the first large-scale utilization of press agentry in politics, as both the McKinley and Bryan campaigns used party press agents. Stephen Ponder, in his study of early twentieth century federal news management, has noted that several executive branch agencies were using publicity specialists during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency.[9] The first decade of the twentieth century also brought the rise of public relations agencies, which combined the methods of press agentry in a more institutionalized and systematic form. Ivy Lee became the most visible corporate relations counsel, working for several industrial interests in the first decades of the twentieth century.[10] During the 1906 coal strike, he was hired by mine operators to handle press relations. In this effort, he went beyond mere press agentry to become both the figurehead and fountainhead for information on the strike. He produced press reports, "signed" by coal industry leaders almost daily and acted as a clearinghouse for information. Lee said his work was designed "to supply to the press and public of the United States prompt and accurate information concerning subjects which it is of value and interest to the public to know about."[11]

The growth of corporate public relations after 1900 can be attributed to several factors. Olasky has noted that utility companies—much as the railroads had done earlier—sought regulation to create the illusion of public control while maintaining their monopoly or oligopoly status.[12] Richard Tedlow asserted that the decline of "heroic" businessmen and the rise of Muckraking journalism caused companies to abandon the "public be damned" attitude of the late nineteenth century.[13] The work of George Creel's Committee on Public Information (CPI) during World War I further illustrated the power of information to persuade the public.

PR practitioners, however, had to defend themselves against charges that they were merely spreading propaganda. Lee's "Declaration of Principles," issued to newspaper editors during the 1906 coal strike, was designed to deflect such charges. "This is not an advertising agency," he wrote, "if you think our matter ought properly to go to your business office, do not use it."[14] The American Newspaper Association (ANPA) began a drive in 1908 to stop free publicity in newspapers, especially when it was tied to advertising contracts.[15] Susan Lucarelli's 1993 study demonstrates how this initial campaign grew into a crusade against all free publicity by the 1910s. Railing against "spacegrabbers," the newspaper industry, through the ANPA and trade journals, tried to discourage papers from accepting free material.[16]

By 1920, then, press agentry had evolved into public relations, bringing a more systematic method to managing press coverage. Corporations increasingly viewed press relations as an important management function, and political, trade and civic organizations sought to control their press coverage as well. Meanwhile, a backlash was forming against organizations that sought free publicity under the guise of news.

Origins of the Mt. Clemens News Bureau: The Tribune Trial

The government of Mexico had been in a seemingly constant state of upheaval since the overthrow of longtime dictator Porfirio Diaz in 1911. Now, in 1916, the dissident leader Pancho Villa was trying to lure the United States into the struggle by conducting a series of attacks on American citizens along the border. It worked: in the summer President Wilson called up National Guard reservists to police the border and sent an army of 6,000 men into Mexico to pursue Villa.[17]

The Chicago Tribune decided to survey the policies of large employers regarding the reservists. The paper's Detroit correspondent tried to contact Henry Ford to find out if the automaker would continue to pay reservists called to duty and reinstate them upon their return. Unable to talk to the automaker personally, the reporter asked one of Ford's secretaries, who erroneously replied that reservists would lose their positions if they were called up.[18]

In truth, the Ford Motor Company's policy toward its reservists was quite generous. Each of the 89 soldiers called to duty was given a special numbered badge that would allow him to be reinstated upon his return, and the Ford Sociological Department visited families left behind to be sure that they were getting by financially.[19] The Tribune, however, took the secretary at his word, and on June 23, 1916, published an editorial titled "Ford is An Anarchist."[20] In it, Ford was described as being "so incapable of thought that he cannot see the ignominy of his own performance" and was criticized for not supporting military service:

> If Ford allows this rule of his shops to stand, he will reveal himself not as merely an ignorant idealist but as an anarchistic enemy of the nation which protects him in his wealth. A man so ignorant as Henry Ford may not understand the fundamentals of the government under which he lives.[21]

Ford called the newspaper, informing its publisher, Colonel Robert R. McCormick, that the car company's policy had been misstated. Ford asked for a retraction, and when McCormick refused Ford filed a $1 million libel suit.[22]

Ford viewed the trial as not only a chance to punish the Chicago Tribune, but as an opportunity to defeat the "powerful enemies" who opposed his views.[23] As he had risen to prominence in the automobile world during the 1910s, his attempts to branch into other arenas of public life were often met with ridicule in the press. His attempts at "social engineering" that accompanied raising his workers' wages to five dollars a day in 1914, his expedition aboard an ocean liner to sail to Europe to end the war in 1915 and his failed run for Senate in 1918 had all prompted negative press coverage. Ford told Forum magazine in early 1919:

> There is a good part, not all, of the American press that is not free. It is owned body and soul by bankers. When they tell it to bark, it barks. The capitalistic newspapers began a campaign against me. They misquoted me, distorted what I said, made up lies. . . . The invisible government got at its work.[24]

This attitude was responsible in large part for Ford's launching of the Dearborn Independent at the beginning of 1919. The same distrust of "powerful, invisible enemies" would later drive an anti-Semitic campaign in the magazine during 1920 and 1921.[25]

So while Ford felt that the Tribune's attack on him was unwarranted, he viewed the upcoming trial as much more than a mere referendum on whether he had been libeled. He looked forward to taking on one of journalism's elite, especially since he was now a publisher in his own right. He also realized the trial's publicity potential and wanted to use the attention to explain his views to the public.

As the trial approached, however, Ford's enthusiasm diminished when he learned that most small newspapers did not plan to cover the trial.[26] Thus, he concluded that larger papers would favor the Tribune, while smaller papers, which were more likely to share his populist ideals, probably could not afford to send reporters to Mt. Clemens. His personal secretary, Ernest Liebold, suggested that he send some staff members from the Dearborn Independent to Mt. Clemens to provide wired dispatches for the small papers. It sounded like a good idea to Ford, who promptly authorized the creation of the Mt. Clemens News Bureau.[27] Two Independent employees were dispatched to Mt. Clemens to run the operation, and an additional reporter was hired to help. The bureau even provided a press room, complete with typewriters and telephones, for journalists working the trial.[28]

The trial began on May 12, 1919, and one week later the Mt. Clemens News Bureau produced the first of 61 daily bulletins. In it, the entire text of the disputed Tribune article was printed, along with a summary of events in the trial to that point. The jury, according to the release, "comprises the average normal class of Americans, none of whom evinced decided militaristic or pacifist views."[29] For the first three weeks of the trial, the bureau supplied a printed release at the end of each day of testimony. Papers were offered the material for the cost of telegraph or postage.[30]

The bureau assured editors that it would provide a fair account of the trial without any favoritism to Henry Ford. It claimed that the carmaker had charged it with the duty to "give them the truth, no matter who it hits." In a letter to editors, the bureau promised to carry out Ford's orders:

> This is not in any sense propaganda. If we have any propaganda in this connection, it will be sent out as advertising matter and paid for. This service is to be straight court testimony, without editorial bias. . . . Remember that we are here to serve you, hoping that we together may serve the cause of social justice in our country.[31]

Thus, just as Ivy Lee had done during the 1906 coal strike, the Mt. Clemens News Bureau was now trying to legitimize itself in the eyes of newspaper editors.

But the bureau found few takers for its mimeographed reports. Reporters at the trial picked them up and some papers paid to have the bulletins delivered, but most editors were reluctant to spend the money to typeset the reports.[32] D. D. Martin, one of the bureau's employees, had become familiar with the services of the Western Newspaper Union (WNU), and after visiting the company's Detroit plant he approached Ford with an idea.[33] He told Ford that by working with WNU, the Mt. Clemens News Bureau could supply ready-made boilerplate to newspapers free of charge. Ford would pay the WNU for its services, and editors of small town newspapers would not have to pay anything. Ford liked the idea, and told Martin to go ahead with it.[34]

The Western Newspaper Union traced its roots to the Civil War, when the shortage of labor caused many country editors to look for new ways to fill their news pages. Central printing services soon sprang up, supplying news articles already cast in type as boilerplates, ready to be inked and stamped on paper. Thus, rural editors could use the boilerplate for regional and national news, and merely fill in the local material on their own. By 1917, George A. Joslyn had consolidated all of the regional plate services into the Western Newspaper Union, and his service was providing material to about 95 percent of rural papers.[35]

Many rural papers took advantage of the WNU's "readyprint" service, which provided an eight-page newspaper with WNU material on pages two, three, five and seven. Local editors simply filled the blank pages with their own news and advertising. Thus small-town editors could purchase ready-to-ink national news for about the same price as blank paper. WNU made its money by marketing the service to local papers and selling ads that were placed along with the WNU stories. In fact, WNU's readyprint was often referred to as "patent insides" because of the number of advertisements for patent medicines the company placed on its pages.[36]

The use of boilerplate for publicity was nothing new. As the market for readyprint grew, WNU began to tailor its services to individual papers, allowing editors to choose from among a variety of news and editorial material. Such variety, of course, required a greater amount of material, and WNU thus began to accept "news" material and editorials placed by corporate and governmental interests. During a Senate investigation of WNU in 1914, Joslyn revealed that WNU regularly distributed propaganda under the guise of news. Most notably, the company had accepted more than $3 million from Canada to provide coverage that would encourage American farmers to move north.[37] During the 1920s, utility companies, through hired PR firms, distributed boilerplate news and editorial items to individual papers through WNU and other services.[38] Boilerplate had an additional advantage for groups seeking publicity as it could only be edited through a time-consuming drilling process that often produced unsatisfactory results.[39]

By the end of June 1919, Ford's news bureau had issued its first boilerplate output. It encouraged papers to take advantage of the free material:

> [The Mt. Clemens News Bureau] realizes that although the most important testimony in the case is yet to be heard, many editors will not be able to give it the

> space which it deserves, or which they desire, unless the suggestion for adopting plate in the place of bulletins is followed.[40]

The boilerplate consisted essentially of the same material contained in the daily and weekly mimeographed releases, shortened to about 800 words, a little less than a column. At its peak, the bureau provided boilerplate to more than 250 daily papers and almost 3,300 weeklies at a total cost to Ford or more than $50,000.[41]

Despite its pledge to provide "the truth, no matter who it hits," the bureau could not hide its allegiance to Ford. Its reports often took opportunities to subtly discredit the Tribune, especially as the newspaper mounted its defense. One Tribune witness was described as a "preparedness propagandist" whose testimony was "rather lame in spots."[42] As the paper tried to establish its case that Ford's pacifism was potentially damaging to U.S. interests and that his company's assistance to the reservists' families was not all that Ford's lawyers had asserted it was, the Mt. Clemens News Bureau yawned. "Every little while," one bulletin noted, "the Tribune lawyers get back to the main issue, which is the alleged libel inflicted on Henry Ford."[43]

When Ford appeared in Mt. Clemens, he provided carefully orchestrated photo opportunities for the press. Photographers eagerly followed Ford on his daily "impromptu" walks after court adjourned, and the carmaker delighted in extolling his philosophies to reporters as he strolled the countryside. Every so often, Ford would pose so he could be photographed in rural surroundings: standing by a farm pump, sitting on a shock of wheat or talking to an elderly farmer.[44]

The news bureau eagerly played along with Ford's efforts to appear folksy. One bulletin was devoted almost exclusively to covering Ford's daily stroll, noting that he was trying to walk off a headache. Ford explained that he had been "fussing" with a motor the night before and had inhaled gasoline fumes. "He stated the fact as simply as if it were common for millionaires to put on overalls and work around greasy machinery," the bulletin said. The 55-year old carmaker's "walk" was then chronicled:

> He made a bee-line to the town limits and struck out cross-country. Being a lithe man with not an ounce of superfluous flesh and very agile in his movements, little impediments like farm fences did not impede him at all. He scaled them easily, even the barbed-wire ones, one hand on top of the fence post, and then a flying leap which allowed even the tails of his spring overcoat to clear.[45]

Ford became the 101st witness to take the stand in the trial after being called by the Tribune as a defense witness. Ford lawyers, rather than basing their case on the fact that the words "anarchist" and "anarchistic" were libelous per se, had decided to dispute the entire Tribune article. Thus, the newspaper's lawyers were able to call Ford to the stand in an effort to demonstrate that he was, in fact, "ignorant."[46]

Ford's performance reflected his lack of knowledge about history and his disinterest in formal learning. Tribune attorneys, after questioning Ford about his peace crusades and patriotic beliefs, then set out to quiz Ford on American history:

> Q: Have there been any revolutions in this country?
> A: Yes.
> Q: When?
> A: In 1812.
> Q: One in 1812, eh? Any other time?
> A: I don't know of any others.
> Q: Do you know that this country was born in a revolution?
> A: Yes, in 1776.
> Q: Did you forget that revolution?
> A: I guess so.[47]

In other testimony, Ford identified Benedict Arnold as a writer.[48]

The bulletins put out by the Mt. Clemens News Bureau glossed over Ford's witness stand blunders, instead concentrating on his friendly demeanor:

> The witness was patient and always willing to answer. . . but the petty, nagging methods which counsel pursued led Mr. Ford several times to say that if it would serve any purpose he would admit that he was an "ignorant idealist" and let it go at that. . . . Later in the examination the name of Benedict Arnold arose, which name Ford confused with that of an author, a mistake of which Tribune counsel endeavored to make capital, but it came to nothing.[49]

The Mt. Clemens News Bureau bulletins described the Tribune's "strategy, badinage and violence" toward Ford, but noted that the carmaker was unfazed: "[H]is smile is undiminished, the freshness of his vigor is unabated; he even gives evidence of enjoying his experience."[50] In discussing the Tribune's questioning of Ford on military procedure, the bureau's report implied that Ford should have been above such interrogation. "The man who directs four times as many employees as there are soldiers in the United States army in 1915 was then subjected to an inquiry as to his knowledge of military technique," it noted.[51]

During the trial, Martin carried on correspondence with O.O. Buck, Secretary of the Nebraska Press Association, that represented a microcosm of the debate over publicity taking place in the industry. At the end of July, Buck wrote a letter criticizing the bureau's publicity. In it, he noted that his papers refused to accept Ford's boilerplate service:

> This stand is not taken so much because of enmity to Mr. Ford but because of an abiding conviction that free space grafters must be shown that their efforts are useless. . . . None of us can feel very friendly towards the man who tries to use our stock in trade without paying for it.[52]

Martin's reply argued from the position that the bureau was not "using" newspapers but rather providing a service. He assured Buck that newspaper editors, as "a class of men who are noted for their ability to think and act for themselves," would not print the bureau's material if it was not true.[53]

In a larger sense, however, Martin was missing Buck's point that the news bureau blurred the line between news and advertising. Instead, he took offense at Buck's implication that the Ford Motor Company did not pay to advertise and spent nearly two full typewritten pages noting how much the company spent on local newspaper advertising through its more than 7,000 dealers. The news bureau's output could not be considered publicity, Martin seemed to be saying, because it was separate from Ford's vast advertising budget.[54]

Buck's response picked up on the weakness of Martin's argument in favor of the news bureau:

> I can only interpret your letter and your actions in general as a plea that because the Ford Motor Company is and always has been a liberal patron of the newspapers that the papers should assist free of charge in promoting the personal interests of Mr. Ford. This is unfair and you know it.[55]

Buck also noted that at the Nebraska Press Association's most recent meeting it had voted to try to curb efforts at free publicity. For his part, Buck said, he was doing what he could "in trying to abolish the abuses that have crept into the country newspaper business."[56]

Martin expressed surprise at Buck's second letter, noting that the bureau had already "answered" Buck's concerns outlined in the original letter. Still failing to address the central argument against free publicity, Martin turned to a discussion of the trial's importance. "[I]n the real sense, Henry Ford was not on trial." Martin asserted. "The entire proceeding was merely the gateway through which the concentrated antagonism of great interests towards Mr. Ford's policies was hurled in one supreme attack." With so much at stake, Martin claimed, the Mt. Clemens News Bureau was fulfilling a duty to small town newspapers:

> Knowing that Mr. Ford. . . was merely the means to the end sought by men who are opposed to the ideals of the social and industrial era towards which he is swiftly blazing a path, the Mt. Clemens News Bureau was established so that the people in the uttermost corners of the country, the people served by the small dailies and the small weeklies, might receive full and unbiased reports.[57]

By the time of this, Martin's second letter to Buck, the jury had rendered its verdict in the case. There are no records in the Ford Archives indicating any further correspondence between the two men. Martin, Liebold and others involved in the news bureau continued to insist that the service was impartial. One letter of inquiry, from Brooklyn's Flatbush Observer, asked if the bureau provided material favorable to Ford. "If so, we would be pleased to publish it; if not we will refuse it," the letter said. Liebold replied that the plate service would be "as near to the facts as possible."[58] Only years later would Liebold admit that the news bureau produced something other than "straight news," especially when Ford was on the witness stand. "Of course, we always did try to make explanations for certain things in there," he said.[59]

The Tribune was found guilty of libeling Ford on August 14, 1919, but the jury, seeing no real damage to the carmaker, awarded him only six cents. In a final dispatch, the Mt. Clemens News Bureau thanked newspapers for using the service and noted Ford's satisfaction with the verdict. "Naturally, the monetary compensation held no particular interest for him," it said.[60] After the trial, Ford and Liebold agreed that the Mt. Clemens News Bureau was a worthwhile undertaking. Ford announced that the news bureau would be made permanent, providing small papers with independent accounts of events of national importance and publicizing the activities of the Ford Motor Company.[61]

Thus, at the end of August 1919, J.J. O'Neill, one of the bureau's reporters, was dispatched to ride with President Wilson's rail tour in support of the League of Nations. Plates, reflecting Ford's enthusiasm for Wilson's objectives, were sent to 5,500 newspapers, all of whom had requested the service by returning a stamped card.[62] The effort attracted the attention of the League's opponents: Senators Henry Cabot Lodge and Lawrence Y. Sherman discussed Ford's publicity campaign on the floor of the Senate, noting that small-town newspapers were eagerly accepting the material:

> The advantage of having daily bulletins on [President Wilson's] mental processes and conclusions on or before sunrise is worth to the publisher of any country newspaper the trouble of signing the stamped card and depositing it in the United States mail.[63]

Calling Ford "The President's Angel," Sherman sarcastically noted that Wilson and the carmaker made a good team. "Henry has the money, and our beloved President has the ideas." He said. "When the two combine, the public education can not suffer."[64]

Covering Wilson's rail tour cost Ford more than $33,500, and despite the ultimate failure of the League, the President later acknowledged the bureau's contribution to the cause.[65] At the conclusion of the tour in December 1919, Martin, O'Neill and Liebold decided that the bureau should be renamed the "Independent News Bureau." The staff began distributing news about the Ford Motor Company to a small number of newspapers, but interest in the bureau was waning both on the part of the press and Ford and Liebold. By the beginning of 1920, Liebold demanded that papers start paying for the plate service, and the few papers that were using it stopped. Despite a five-page memo by Martin outlining possible uses of the Independent News Bureau to publicize Ford and the Ford Motor Company, the bureau was closed in February 1920. Interestingly, when a Ford Motor

Company News Bureau was formed in 1942, many of Martin's ideas were incorporated.[66]

Three years after the bureau had closed, Ford's Dearborn Independent criticized the American Bankers' Association for providing free plate service to newspapers. "Of course 'free plate service' always means propaganda," said the magazine, conveniently failing to mention its own activities during the summer of 1919 in Mt. Clemens.[67]

Conclusion

Henry Ford's Mt. Clemens News Bureau was an embodiment of converging trends in public relations and rural newspapers of the early twentieth century. Public relations was becoming a more systematized form of the press agentry of the late 1800s, and its practitioners sought news ways to reach a wider audience. The Western Newspaper Union, with its captive audience of thousands of small weekly and daily papers, provided just such a way to distribute messages to the public.

That such messages need not necessarily be unbiased was shown by the Mt. Clemens News Bureau. While the bureau's editors maintained that it was providing straight news, in reality it provided a view of the proceedings that was slanted to suit its owner's interests. Rural readers, who for the most part had no other source of national news, probably did not know; and rural editors, at least those thousands who ran the material, seemed not to care. Thus Ford's bureau—and others that preceded and succeeded it—could view their work as providing a "service" to rural editors and readers. The backlash against "space grafters" was directed mostly at large papers, but it played out in the rural papers as well.

Western Newspaper Union's readyprint services began to decline in the 1920s as more editors opted for the versatility of buying individual boilerplates. After the 1920s, boilerplate began a steady decline as well, the victim of wire services, better typesetting and the distribution of city papers into small towns. WNU discontinued its boilerplate service in 1952, thus bringing to a close the nearly century-old tradition of the boilerplated rural newspaper.[68]

The symbiotic relationship between publicity agents, the WNU and rural editors is an understudied area of communications history. This examination of the Mt. Clemens News Bureau has shown that the structure of the rural newspaper industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century provided an effective and substantial channel for distributing news and propaganda. Early public relations practitioners may have done their most visible work in the large newspapers and national media, but thousands of tiny rural newspapers fed an important audience as well. As Henry Ford and others found, reaching this large but dispersed audience was made significantly easier by the use of boilerplate.

NOTES

[1] Robert Lacey, Ford: The Men and the Machine (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1986), 198.

[2] David L. Lewis, "Henry Ford Meets the Press: An Encounter with the Chicago Tribune," Michigan History 52 (1969): 275.

[3] Mt. Clemens News Bureau Clippings Book, Accession 53, Box 17, in Ford Archives, Henry Ford Museum, Dearborn Michigan (Hereafter referred to as HFM).

[4] "Henry Ford at Bay," Forum, August 19, 1919, 136.

[5] See David L. Lewis, The Public Image of Henry Ford (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1976); Lacey, Ford: The Men and the Machine; Allan Nevins with Frank Ernest Hill, Ford: Expansion and Challenge (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957); and Keith Sward, The Legend of Henry Ford (New York: Rinehart and Company, 1948).

[6] See Richard S. Tedlow, Keeping the Corporate Image: Public Relations and Business, 1900-1950 (Greenwich, Conn.: Jai Press, Inc., 1979); Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, Effective Public Relations (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1982); and Allan R. Raucher, Public Relations and Business, 1900-1929 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1968).

[7] Cutlip and Center, Effective Public Relations, 75.

[8] Marvin M. Olasky, "The Development of Corporate Public Relations, 1850-1930," Journalism Monographs, April 1987, 5-12.

[9] Stephen Ponder, "Federal News Management in the Progressive Era: Gifford Pinchot and the Conservation Crusade," Journalism History 13 (Summer 1986): 42-3.

[10] Olasky, "Development of Corporate Public Relations," 25-6.

[11] Ray Eldon Hiebert, Courtier to the Crowd: The Story of Ivy Lee and the Development of Public Relations (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1966), 48.

[12] Olasky, "Development of Corporate Public Relations," 16.

[13] Tedlow, Keeping the Corporate Image, 14.

[14] Hiebert, Courtier to the Crowd, 48.

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[17] John Milton Cooper, Pivotal Decades (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990), 225-7.

[18] Lacy, Ford: The Men and the Machine, 197-8.

[19] Ibid.

[20] "Ford is An Anarchist," Chicago Tribune, June 23, 1916.

[21] Ibid.

[22] See "Ford People Say France Won't Resell Cars at Big Profit nor Let Them Import Metals," New York Times, February 5, 1919; and "Ford Suit To Be Tried at Mt. Clemens," New York Times, April 5, 1919.

[23] Mt. Clemens News Bureau to Editors, May 19, 1919, in Accession 53 Box 17, HFM.

[24] "Henry Ford at Bay," 136.

[25] Leo P. Ribuffo, "Henry Ford and the International Jew," American Jewish History 69 (June 1980): 437-477.

[26] Ernest Liebold, Reminiscences (oral history), HFM.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] "The Ford-Tribune Libel Case" (first bulletin), Accession 53 Box 9, HFM.

[30] Ibid.

[31] See William C. Richards, "Sparing No Expense to Win a Million," Detroit Free Press, July 21, 1919; and Mt. Cle-

mens News Bureau to Editors, May 19, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[32] Lewis, "Henry Ford Meets the Press," 279.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Eugene C. Harter, Boilerplating America: The Hidden Newspaper (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 54.

[36] See Harter, Boilerplating America, 102-106; "Big Boiler-Plater," Time, April 27, 1936, 28-9; "Boilerplate Era," Business Week, February 16, 1952, 32; and Thomas Whiteside, "Boiler Plate Empire," New Republic, November 17, 1947, 15.

[37] Harter, Boilerplating America, 153-8.

[38] See Ernest Gruening, The Public Pays: A Study of Power Propaganda (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1931), 172; and Olasky, "Development of Corporate Public Relations," 19.

[39] Harter, Boilerplating America, 35.

[40] Mt. Clemens News Bureau to Editors, June 9, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[41] See Circulation Figures, Accession 53, Box 17; and Mt. Clemens News Bureau Expenditures, nd., Accession 62, Box 104, both in HFM.

[42] Mt. Clemens News Bureau Bulletin Number 24, June 20, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[43] Mt. Clemens News Bureau Bulletin Number 26, June 24, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[44] See "Henry Ford at Bay," 238; and Irving Bacon, Reminiscences (oral history), HFM.

[45] Mt. Clemens News Bureau Bulletin Number 6, May 26, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[46] Lacy, Ford: The Men and the Machine, 199-200.

[47] Sward, The Legend of Henry Ford, 104.

[48] "Odd Definitions Given By Ford in Libel Suit," New York Times, July 17, 1919.

[49] Mt. Clemens News Bureau Bulletin Number 40, July 17, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[50] See Ibid.; and Mt. Clemens News Bureau Bulletin Number 41, July 18, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[51] Mt. Clemens News Bureau Report Number 42, July 19, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[52] O.O. Buck to Mt. Clemens News Bureau, July 26, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[53] D.D. Martin to O.O. Buck, August 5, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[54] Ibid.

[55] O.O. Buck to D.D. Martin, August 8, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[56] Ibid.

[57] D.D. Martin to O.O. Buck, August 18, 1919, Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[58] See Flatbush Observer to Henry Ford, July 14, 1919; and Ernest Liebold to Flatbush Observer, July 21, 1919, both in Accession 62, Box 104, HFM.

[59] Liebold, Reminiscences, HFM.

[60] Mt. Clemens News Bureau to Editors, nd. Accession 53, Box 17, HFM.

[61] Lewis, The Public Image of Henry Ford, 107.

[62] See Martin to Liebold, August 24, 1919; Martin to Liebold, September 2, 1919; Martin to Liebold, September 4, 1919; and Martin to Liebold, September 24, 1919, all in Accession 62, Box 104, HFM.

[63] Congressional Record, 66th Congress, 1st Session, 5156.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Martin to Liebold, September 11, 1919 Accession 62, Box 104, HFM.

[66] See Martin to Liebold, January 3, 1920; and Fred R. Dolsen to Martin, January 9, 1920, both in Accession 284, Box 17; Martin to Liebold, August 8, 1919, Accession 62, Box 104, HFM; and Lewis, The Public Image of Henry Ford, 108.

[67] "'Boiler Plate' Aid to Propaganda," Dearborn Independent, November 24, 1923, 3.

[68] See Harter, Boilerplating America, 161; and "Boilerplate Era," 32.

The Delightful Relationship: Presidents and White House Correspondents in the 1920s

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The Delightful Relationship: Presidents and White House Correspondents in the 1920s

This paper is part of a larger inquiry into the roots of the twentieth century relationship between the executive and the news media. It re-examines the presidencies of the 1920s and confirms that significant long-term changes in executive publicity practices took place in the Harding and Coolidge administrations.

The paper argues specifically that management of the press by executive officials became institutionalized in the White House between 1921 and 1929. Harding and Coolidge turned publicity initiatives of earlier Presidents in permanent practices, including scheduling regular press conferences, lobbying the correspondents personally and through their development trade associations, and utilizing new technologies such as newsreels and radio to reach out to the citizenry.

As a result, managing the press from the White House to influence public opinion became a permanent fixture of executive governance, with established procedures and routines of behavior. Central to this transformation was the cooperation of Washington, D.C., correspondents, who by the end of the 1920s had established parallel practices of newsgathering to transmit the President's messages to their audiences.

That this institutionalization took place in the "placid twenties," rather than during a national crisis, suggests that executive management of public opinion through the press was more than a wartime aberration or the activism of individual Presidents. Rather, it was a key part of the twentieth century expansion of presidential and executive power by appealing to the public through available means of mass communications.

The Delightful Relationship: Presidents and White House Correspondents in the 1920s

The 1920s long have been viewed as something of an interlude in the twentieth century expansion of presidential management of public opinion through the news media. To Washington, D.C., Correspondent Fletcher Knebel, they were the "Placid Twenties," stretching generously from the end of World War I to the turbulence of the New Deal.[1] The political scientist Elmer C. Cornwell Jr., in his formative study, Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion, referred to the administrations of Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge as a period of "consolidation" in White House appeals to the public through the press, and to the unhappy single term of Herbert Hoover, who took office in 1929, as a "retrogression."[2]

Yet this dismissiveness seems overstated. Historians critical of the Harding presidency nevertheless acknowledge his successes in dealing with the press.[3] Charles Willis Thompson, a veteran New

York Times correspondent whose observations of Presidents began with McKinley, claimed that Coolidge was by far the most successful at publicity, and that even Theodore Roosevelt was an amateur by comparison.[4] Under Harding and Coolidge, the presidential press conference became a permanent institution, and both Presidents were quick to take advantage of the advancing technologies of photography, film and radio.[5] In addition, Hoover, who was Secretary of Commerce to both Presidents, created a sophisticated publicity operation in the Department of Commerce.[6]

It is also indicative that by the late 1920s, Washington, D.C., correspondents had begun an extensive literature of complaint about the expansion of government publicity activity. In 1927, for example, J. Frederick Essary of the Baltimore Sun wrote that "Washington has become the great generator of propaganda in this country." He added: "In almost every department there is a chief of a 'bureau of information' which is merely a title for an official press agent."[7]

This paper, which focuses on the Harding and Coolidge administrations, is part of a larger inquiry into the roots of the twentieth century relationship between the executive and the news media. What makes the inquiry significant is the deterioration of that relationship late in the century. Presidents since at least the 1960s have sought increasingly to reach the public through alternative means of mass communication, and the news media themselves have become increasingly conflicted about their role in constructing news about the presidency.[8]

Re-examination of executive-press relations in the Harding and Coolidge administrations confirms that significant changes did indeed take place between 1921 and 1929. The paper argues specifically that recognizably modern publicity practices by executive officials became institutionalized in the White House and in major executive agencies in these years. That is, management of the news media to influence public opinion became a permanent fixture of executive governance, with established procedures and routines of behavior that formed a foundation for subsequent twentieth century Presidents, including Franklin D. Roosevelt.[9]

That this institutionalization took place in the "placid twenties," rather than in a period of national crisis, suggests that increased executive management of public opinion through the news media early in the century was more than a wartime aberration or the activism of individual Presidents. Rather, it was a key part of the broad expansion of presidential and executive power that began in the late nineteenth century, when reaching out to the public for support began to supplant constitutional limitations on the President's governing authority.[10]

Central to this extension of the President's persuasive powers was the availability of growing numbers of Washington, D.C., correspondents willing to transmit his messages to the citizenry. The paper also suggests that increased presidential management of these correspondents, especially the encouragement of an organized White House press corps, contributed to a parallel institutionalization of journalistic practices in the 1920s. For example, congressional historian Donald Ritchie notes that it was in the 1920s that the correspondents began to consider the presidency the equal of Congress as a desirable "beat." Before then, the correspondents concentrated primarily on Congress and covered the executive mostly when Congress was not in session.[11]

One factor limiting archival research into the executive-press relationship in the Harding and Coolidge administrations has been their truncated presidential manuscript collections. Harding's presidential papers were heavily edited by his family after his death in office, and Coolidge apparently discarded nearly all White House records except the incoming mail.[12] Nevertheless, some indicative primary documents were found and examined, as well as extensive writing on the subject by contemporary journalists.

Prior to the 1920s, substantial government experimentation with publicity had taken place, both in the presidency and in the executive departments. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, individual Presidents and executive administrators tried to reach the public by taking advantage of the growing appetite for news among commercial daily newspapers and magazines. They were particularly interested in trying to attract the attention of Washington, D.C., correspondents for the news services and daily newspapers, who were becoming the primary means of transmitting political news from the Capitol to mass reading audiences.[13]

However, the level of publicity activity had varied from administration to administration and between times of war and peace.[14] During the Spanish-American War, President William

McKinley invited the correspondents into the executive mansion, and maintained regular, if distant, contact with them afterwards.[15] His successor, Theodore Roosevelt, sought publicity aggressively and invited favored correspondents to visit with him daily.[16] But William Howard Taft, who followed Roosevelt, preferred to avoid publicity and correspondents whenever possible.[17] Woodrow Wilson reversed Taft's aloofness and held press conferences twice a week that were open to all correspondents. But these regular conferences were ended in 1915, ostensibly because of the need for security in the developing European crisis.[18] Executive management of the press intensified during World War I, primarily through the Committee on Public Information.[19] However, after the war and, especially, after Wilson's incapacitating stroke in 1919, the White House again ceased to be a primary news center.

By the time that Harding took office, in March 1921, no regularly scheduled presidential news conferences had been held for nearly six years, and the wartime expansion of executive publicity had waned. The focus of the Washington, D.C., correspondents had returned to a resurgent Congress, where the Senate had defeated Wilson's League of Nations Treaty.[20]

Harding set out to re-establish the White House as an important source of news. During his 29 months as President, from March 1921 to August 1923, Harding instituted or re-established practices of managing the press which became permanent after they were adopted by his successor, Coolidge, and subsequent twentieth century presidents. These included frequent, regularly scheduled presidential press conferences with established rules of attendance and conduct; expansion of the President's personal and professional relationships with the Washington, D.C., correspondents, their clubs and newspaper industry trade associations, and the encouragement of parallel publicity activity by the President's Cabinet to support administration policies.

Harding had several advantages in establishing a closer presidential relationship with the press. Unlike Wilson, he was a Republican, as were most of the daily newspapers who employed Washington, D.C., correspondents.[21] Harding had been a newspaper publisher and understood how news was produced, at least at the Marion, Ohio, Star. In addition, Harding saw the Washington, D.C., press in action as a U.S. Senator and met influential press figures, including Ned McLean, publisher of the Washington Post.

Moreover, Harding genuinely liked newspapermen. He befriended the correspondents who moved to Marion in 1920 for his "front porch" presidential campaign.[22] The correspondents, whose most recent presidential experiences had been with an aloof Taft or a magisterial Wilson, responded. About a dozen of the Republican correspondents formed an insiders' group, the "Order of the Elephant," to socialize with Harding during the campaign and, later, to form a nucleus of a revitalized White House press corps.[23] When the President-elect greeted 50 correspondents in his hotel suite on the eve of his inauguration, he assured them "I am just a newspaperman myself."[24] To demonstrate his willingness to be helpful, he came out of the White House after midnight to tell correspondents the outcome of his first presidential conference with congressional leaders.[25]

The most visible evidence of Harding's campaign to form a closer working relationship with the press was the re-establishment of regular presidential press conferences. In January 1921, Harding received a detailed series of suggestions from Gus J. Karger of the Cincinnati Times-Star, a veteran correspondent who had served as an unofficial liaison between the press and the previous Republican President, Taft. In the memorandum, Karger suggested that both Harding and his Cabinet officers make themselves readily available for questioning by correspondents and hold frequent, regularly scheduled news conferences. "The newspapermen want the news ... Everything that is done to make it easy for them in their legitimate requirements will help them and assist the Administration," Karger wrote. Karger also suggested rules of conduct under which the President could be openly questioned but that his responses could not be quoted directly or indirectly without his consent. Harding seems to have followed Karger's advice closely. He announced that press conferences would be held twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays, following his Cabinet meetings, and that individual Cabinet members would hold regular press conferences as well.[26]

At Harding's first post-inaugural press conference, he greeted the correspondents warmly, shook hands with each one, and then talked candidly about the Cabinet meeting he had just left. Edward G. Lowry, a magazine writer, contrasted the welcoming atmosphere with Wilson's first press conference eight years earlier. Unlike Wilson, Harding did not lecture to the correspondents and then take offense at their questions. Instead, according to Lowry, Harding "did not wait for questions, but began to talk, an easy, gossipy chat about the first Cabinet meeting of his administration. He knew the professional interests of his hearers. He told them 'the story' of what they came to hear."[27]

Harding's candid remarks at these twice-weekly conferences made news, even if he could not be identified as the source. They also gave the correspondents a useful interpretation of events and policies. "He knows what is news and has an attractive way of communicating it to the press," wrote Richard V. Oulahan, Washington bureau chief of the New York Times. "He has the news sense, the nose for news, and frequently goes out of his way to give them the sidelights on government affairs more interesting than important and having a human touch that makes attractive reading matter."[28]

After being shunned or barely tolerated by Taft and Wilson, the correspondents were attracted to these frequent, predictable opportunities to question the President openly and to receive candid replies.[29] Instead of diminishing after Harding's inauguration, attendance at the press conferences grew to include crowds of 50 or more correspondents and hangers-on, prompting the President to encourage a revival of the White House Correspondents Association, formed at Wilson's request, to regulate attendance by screening out non-correspondents.[30]

However, as press attention to the President's statements increased, so did the consequences of Harding's injudicious or erroneous remarks. By the fall of 1921, after more than one misstatement found its way into print, Harding reinstated Wilson's rule that all questions at his press conferences must be submitted in advance in writing.[31] The correspondents grumbled at the inconvenience but their attraction to the press conferences was undiminished. "The correspondents still attend in unprecedented numbers Mr. Harding's bi-weekly audiences," Edward G. Lowry wrote. "They find these meetings useful. They get news. These contacts are reproduced in a thousand places. The President is presented as he presents himself with all his native kindliness and appealing qualities to the fore."[32]

Harding's campaign to win over the press went well beyond maintaining regular press conferences. He was the first President to take full advantage of the increasing use of still photography by newspapers and magazines and of movie newsreels. Taft and Wilson regarded posing for photographers as burdensome and submitted reluctantly.[33] Harding, however, cheerfully walked out into the White House garden to be photographed or filmed with the visitors of the day, whether they were Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, golfers, printers, delegations from service clubs, and even Albert Einstein. The handsome, smiling President took a good picture, and many of them were reproduced in magazines and in newspaper rotogravure sections. For example, the 3 April 1921 picture section of the New York Times Sunday edition contained five photographs of Harding, including two from the White House Easter egg roll; one of the President playing with his dog, "Laddie," one of him posing with former President Taft, and another with a delegation from the National Disabled Citizens' League.

"It is effective publicity and quite legitimate," Lowry wrote. "The people who are taken with the Presidents and their friends like the pictures. The newspapers print them because they are news and because they interest readers."[34] The popularity of these new photo opportunities drew additional photographers to the White House. In June 1921, a White House News Photographers Association was organized to limit access to those who were properly accredited.[35]

Beyond the White House, Harding made an intensive effort to lobby the correspondents individually and also through their developing professional and industrial trade associations. In Washington, D.C., he chatted with the correspondents, played in their golf tournaments, and attended the social and professional gatherings of the White House Correspondents Association, the Gridiron Club, and the National Press Club.[36] He chose the National Press Club's annual "Hobby Party" as the forum for his first formal speech after inauguration.[37] In 1922, Harding again chose the National Press Club as the site for a formal report on his first year in office, which included praise for the press and a request for its continued support. Club members presented him with a birthday cake with one candle on it and reportedly gave the President an ovation.[38]

Harding also attended or sent formal messages to the annual meetings of industry associations such as the Associated Press and the American Newspaper Publishers Association. Previous Presidents occasionally attended these meetings of influential publishers and editors but few contributed statements of such lavish praise and good fellowship.[39] In 1923, however, after his administration had been attacked by the Hearst newspapers for supposed ineffectiveness and corruption, Harding appeared before the American Society of Newspaper Editors to endorse their consideration of a code of ethics for journalists.[40]

Despite increasing reports of corruption, Harding's two-year "honeymoon" with the press, as William Allen White described it, continued until the President's death in August 1923 and was reflected in the effusive editorial tributes which followed.[41] "No president has ever maintained more mutually frank and satisfactory contacts with the reporters; none, of the many more gifted in making Page One news, has been more highly esteemed," wrote the trade journal, Editor and Publisher.[42] The Standing Committee of Correspondents, which controlled congressional press accreditation, adopted a similarly worded resolution: "No finer contact of genuine understanding and sympathy ever was established between an American president and the newspapermen than that which governed the relations of President Warren G. Harding and the writers of the Capitol." The Standing Committee selected an escort of correspondents who had covered Harding during his career to march in the President's funeral procession.[43]

Harding's successor, Coolidge, refined and advanced Harding's approaches to molding public opinion through the press. Between August 1923 and March 1929, Coolidge continued to meet with the correspondents frequently and to cultivate their developing relationship, individually and through the trade associations; made himself readily available for photographs and films, and experimented with the new mass medium of radio.

At the White House, Coolidge for the first time extended a previous President's practice of regularly scheduled press conferences into a new administration.[44] Harding's death had caused considerable anxiety among the expanded corps of correspondents who had been drawn to the White House by the increased access to presidential news. The White House "clan" of correspondents consisted of only two dozen members in March 1921, when they were photographed after Harding's first presidential press conference.[45] In August 1923, however, an estimated 150 correspondents attended President Coolidge's first press conference. When Coolidge assured them that he would continue to hold regular press conferences, the relieved correspondents applauded and, while posing for their group photograph afterwards, gave the new President three cheers of support.[46]

Frederick William Wile, a correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor and other newspapers, prepared a ceremonial transcript of the first Coolidge press conference that described the "spontaneous and hearty burst of applause" as "a token of gratitude to Mr. Coolidge and an expression of the satisfaction in which the 'entente' between President and press had been inaugurated." Wile wrote the President that "you know, of course, the unqualified satisfaction of our fraternity with our initial contact with you and of the prevalent confidence that the relationship is destined to grow more delightful as time goes on."[47]

Although Coolidge continued to hold the twice-weekly conferences, the new President was neither as gregarious nor as outspoken as Harding. His newsworthy remarks were infrequent, and his words were carefully chosen, even off the record.[48] "Everything that the President does potentially at least is of such great importance that he must be constantly on guard," the cautious Coolidge wrote in his Autobiography.[49] Fragmentary records in the Coolidge Papers suggest that the President was supplied with typewritten notes containing questions from the correspondents and one-paragraph answers to read if he chose to do so.[50]

While the new President could be talkative, even garrulous on occasion, he nevertheless said little at the conferences that the correspondents found useful. Nor did he volunteer background information to help them to interpret the events of the day. The correspondents, who had grown accustomed under Harding to sending stories about the President to their publications on a regular basis, were left without their customary supply of presidential news. Two months after Coolidge became President, some correspondents were being transferred to other duties. Puzzled editors and publishers started to attend Coolidge's press conferences themselves to discover what had stopped the flow of news, according to a report in the trade journal Editor and Publisher.[51] An account of one Coolidge press conference, in May 1924, described the President flipping quickly through the written questions submitted by the correspondents, answering each negatively; sidestepping a single spoken question, and then ending the session 12 minutes after it began.[52]

The correspondents who continued to attend also grew increasingly frustrated by the ground rules that allowed the President to make announcements more or less anonymously. Coolidge was by no means the first President to utilize this practice, which limited the correspondents to attributing any quotable statements to sources "close to the president" or to the "White House spokesman." However, public grumbling by the correspondents increased as Coolidge repeatedly used the device to launch trial balloons and then to deny statements that turned out to be erroneous or too controversial.[53] To protect his deniability, Coolidge refused to allow the correspondents to bring a stenographer to press conferences to record his remarks. As the disagreement dragged on, some correspondents wrote sarcastically about the "official spokesman" who was short, like the President; wore a blue suit, like the President; sat in the President's chair at the President's desk, and was intimately familiar with the President's thinking.[54] The correspondents were particularly miffed in 1926 when Coolidge granted a rare on-the-record interview to a non-journalist, the advertising executive Bruce Barton, which was then distributed by the Associated Press.[55]

Despite the complaints, Raymond Clapper of United Press acknowledged that the correspondents still attended the press conferences and "are willing to endure occasional irritations rather than give up a good source of news."[56] In any case, to maintain their access to the President for whatever news they could find, the correspondents had little choice but to comply.[57]

Although he lacked Harding's personal charm and a common journalistic bond, Coolidge nevertheless tried to reach out to the correspondents professionally and socially. He regularly attended the dinners of the White House Correspondents Association and the Gridiron Club.[58] He spoke at the ceremony in 1926 at which the cornerstone was laid for the National Press Club building and took the occasion to make a major foreign policy statement.[59] After the 1924 presidential campaign, Coolidge invited selected editors and prominent correspondents for a cruise on the presidential yacht, the Mayflower, and further flattered his guests by allowing the event to be filmed for a newsreel.[60] While it was not uncommon for Presidents to greet editors as social equals, the invitation was a heady experience for the correspondents.[61] When Coolidge invited the correspondents and spouses to a Massachusetts cruise on the Mayflower in July 1925, a correspondent's account of the voyage made the front page of the New York Times.[62]

Coolidge continued and expanded Harding's practice of speaking to or sending supportive messages to meetings of media industry and trade associations. These included, at various times, the American

Newspaper Publishers Association, the Associated Press, the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the National Editorial Association, and the Pan American Congress of Journalists.[63] In addition to the indirect benefits of cultivating the news-related associations, Coolidge was interested in the industry as a business to be encouraged. He believed that advertising was essential to business expansion and became the first President to speak to a convention of the American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1926.[64] In the same year, Coolidge agreed to push ceremonially a button at his summer retreat to start the new presses of the New York Post.[65]

Coolidge also continued Harding's notion of encouraging Cabinet members to hold their own press conferences and to speak to journalists on behalf of the administration's policies. In a period when Cabinet members tended to be semi-autonomous party elders, Harding's suggestion had produced mixed results in terms of supportive publicity for the President. But those Cabinet members who took the opportunity to establish or to expand publicity offices in the executive departments gained considerable news coverage and affected Washington, D.C., reporting patterns. Secretary of Commerce Hoover, in particular, drew dozens of correspondents to his news conferences and generated large amounts of publicity not only for the President and the Commerce Department but for himself. Harding strongly supported Hoover's publicity work but Coolidge was less enthusiastic, especially after Hoover became a candidate to succeed Coolidge as President in 1928.[66]

Coolidge, like Harding, was intrigued by the possibilities of appealing to the public through emerging technologies of mass communication. His calculated approach to photo opportunities may have lacked Harding's cheerfulness and spontaneity but Coolidge was more than willing to cooperate. Whether a carrying sap bucket to collect maple syrup, displaying a pet raccoon, throwing out the first ball at baseball games, going fishing, or wearing a cowboy hat, Coolidge and his wife, Grace Goodhue Coolidge, appeared frequently in newspapers, magazines and newsreels. In the New York Times Sunday edition on 8 November 1925, for example, Grace Coolidge posed with a "typical boy" visiting the White House and, in an additional picture, pinned a Red Cross button on the President.[67]

Coolidge was the first President to experiment extensively with the new mass medium of radio. A network of 11 stations was organized to carry his April 1924 speech to the Associated Press directors in New York, although the reception was marred by static and bad weather around the country.[68] After a national network of radio stations was created for the 1924 national political conventions, Coolidge used the network to broadcast several short campaign speeches.[69] His presidential inauguration speech, in March 1925, was the first to be broadcast over radio. It was carried by a coalition of radio companies to a potential audience of 25 million Americans.[70] Coolidge turned out to have a good voice for radio, and his dry wit went over well. The broadcasts of formal speeches also were well received, and the President arranged to speak directly to radio audiences at least once a month.[71]

Coolidge was so successful at promoting himself through publicity that the political scientist Lindsay Rogers, an advocate of Senate supremacy, grew alarmed that the extra-constitutional power of publicity was making the President "the most powerful elected ruler in the world." Coolidge, Rogers warned, was able to launch his views anonymously in the newspapers on Wednesdays and Saturdays by holding press conferences on Tuesdays and Fridays. "It is government by favorable publicity," Rogers complained, and Congress lacked the means to reply.[72]

Congress was not the only institution in the polity affected by increased presidential management of the press. Increasing access to the President accelerated a professionalization of political journalism under way along with the growth of the federal government in the early 1900s. Reporting of government news was becoming a desirable career assignment, not just a stepping stone to a career in politics or business.[73] In a study of Washington correspondents from 1864 to 1932, Samuel Kernell noted that job turnover had decreased significantly, especially after World War I. The growth of newspaper chains and the increased demand for news from Washington, D.C., brought more financial stability to the correspondents, who could work for more than one newspaper at a time.[74] From an estimated 215 daily newspaper correspondents listed in the congressional press gallery in 1920, the group grew to 347 members by 1929.[75]

This trend was particularly noticeable at the White House.

Regular access to the President at press conferences increased both the available supply of news and also the status of correspondents who covered the White House for their newspaper clients. Not surprisingly, the correspondents followed the President's wishes in establishing formal and informal procedures and practices to take advantage of the growing flow of presidential news. This included the establishment or expansion of professional associations created to regulate access to an increasingly valuable source of news. In addition to the White House Correspondents and the White House News Photographers Association, formed at the urgings of Wilson and Harding, similar associations were formed by correspondents covering the executive departments. Secretary of Commerce Hoover directed the correspondents who covered executive agencies to form departmental associations to regulate access to his and other Cabinet news conferences.[76]

Another indicator of professionalization was the increasing public discussion of Washington, D.C., journalism practices by the correspondents themselves, writing in general circulation magazines, trade publications, and in academic journals. Much of this literature focused on the terms of the emerging relationship between the President and the press, especially the restrictive ground rules for presidential press conferences. The correspondents' concern over their frequency, the lack of news, and forced reliance on the "White House spokesman" were all, in their way, indicators of the permanence of the relationship developing between the White House and the correspondents. These dissatisfactions focused not on the novelty of presidential press conferences, which were now considered to be a routine, but on their conduct.[77]

These complaints about the process of press conferences also reflected, at least implicitly, an underlying uneasiness about the dependence of the correspondents in their dealings with the White House. Despite public claims of independence, the correspondents' professional success was increasingly tied to that of their chief news source, the President. Underscoring this dependence, the correspondents reacted protectively under both Harding and Coolidge when the supply of news from the White House was threatened or limited.

Under Harding, this reaction took the form of defending the President from increasing charges of corruption in his administration. "The curious thing about President Harding was that everyone loved him in spite of the horrible debacle of his administration," wrote Olive Ewing Clapper, wife of the United Press correspondent Raymond Clapper.[78] In early 1923, when friends of the embattled Harding suggested appointing a "director of administrative publicity" to better advertise the President's positive achievements, some prominent correspondents approved. Richard V. Oulahan wrote in the New York Times that many newspapermen agreed with a comment by Secretary of Labor James J. Davis that Harding was "the poorest advertiser in the United States." Oulahan wrote that, "on many occasions they have found the president reluctant to furnish enlightenment on acts of his administration, with the result that they have had to obtain information from other and possibly less well informed quarters." Harding quickly disavowed the proposal, as did its reported author, the advertising executive Albert Lasker, but some correspondents remained sympathetic.[79]

Under Coolidge, the correspondents were confronted not with corruption charges against their chief source but by a lack of news from the taciturn President. To generate stories about the presidency that met the expectations of their editors, the correspondents began a more or less open conspiracy to turn Coolidge's silences into news by writing stories about his "character." "It really was a miracle," wrote former United Press correspondent Thomas L. Stokes. "He said nothing. Newspapers must have copy. So we grasped at little incidents to build up human interest and we created a character. He kept his counsel. Therefore, he was a strong and silent man. ... Then, in time, as the country found out that he was not a superman, neither strong nor silent, they emphasized his little witticisms, his dry wit, and we had a national character -- 'Cal.'"[80]

Coolidge shrewdly encouraged the creation of "Silent Cal" by contributing homespun stories and Vermont rusticisms. Several correspondents wrote in their memoirs about this invention of a presidential "character" to cover for the lack of news from Coolidge. Only Frank R. Kent, a Democratic correspondent for the Baltimore Sun, publicly denounced his colleagues for going along with a deception that he said originated with the Republican

National Committee.[81]

These protective reactions were indicators of the symbiotic nature of the new relationship established between the Presidents and the correspondents. Just as the President relied on the correspondents to carry his messages to the citizenry for public support, the correspondents needed access to the President for news that would meet the professional expectations of their employers. The correspondents had established new working practices to accommodate this institutionalization of presidential publicity. An enduring, if uneasy, set of alliances had formed among the presidency, the White House correspondents, and their employers.

Toward the end of the "placid twenties," then, the outlines of the media presidency of the late twentieth century were becoming visible. No longer was management of public opinion through the press an elective activity of particularly vigorous Presidents or during wartime emergencies. Practices once considered novel, like press conferences, were now presumed to be permanent and to follow rules and customs that assumed the continuing existence of the conferences themselves. By appealing to the public through existing and new forms of mass communications, Harding and Coolidge had institutionalized attempts to increase the prominence of the presidency and, potentially, its governing powers, through publicity. Managing the press was now a routine and expected part of the job of executive governance.

1.See Fletcher Knebel, "The Placid Twenties," in Cabell Phillips, ed. Dateline: Washington (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1949): 61-74.

2. See Elmer C. Cornwell Jr., Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965): 59-99.

3.Robert K. Murray, The Harding Era: Warren G. Harding and his Administration (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1969), 113-114. See also Eugene P. Trani and David L. Wilson, The Presidency of Warren G. Harding (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1977).

4.Charles Willis Thompson, "Coolidge Has Learned the Art of Publicity," New York Times, 7 August 1927, 8:11. See also Donald R. McCoy, The Quiet President (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

5. James K. Pollard, The Presidents and the Press (New York: Macmillan, 1947): 697-736, described how Harding's background as a small-town newspaper publisher helped him to forge a close relationship with the Washington, D.C., correspondents. John Tebbel and Sarah Miles Watts, The Press and the Presidency: From George Washington to Ronald Reagan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985): 391-414, portray Coolidge as the most adroit manager of the mass media since Theodore Roosevelt, President from 1901 to 1909.

6.Political scientist James McCamy, author of the first systematic study of departmental publicity, wrote that "administrative publicity in its contemporary scope is generally said to have reached its maturity in the Department of Commerce under the secretaryship of Mr. Herbert Hoover." See McCamy, Government Publicity: Its Practice in Federal Administration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 12, fn19. See also Craig Lloyd, Aggressive Introvert: A Study of Herbert Hoover and Public Relations Management, 1912-1932 (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972), 123-151. For a comprehensive study of Hoover's problems with presidential publicity, see Louis Liebovich, Bylines in Despair: Herbert Hoover, the Great Depression, and the U.S. News Media (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994).

7.The quotations are from J. Frederick Essary, Covering Washington: Government Reflected to the Public in the Press (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927): 18. See also Essary, "Uncle Sam's Ballyhoo Men," American Mercury 23 (August 1931): 419-428.

8.For discussions about the deteriorating relationship between Presidents and the news media, see: Adam Gropkin, "Read All About It," New Yorker, 12 December 1994, 84-102, and Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1993), 55-64, 192-196.

9.These criteria are adapted from Michael Baruch Grossman and Martha Joynt Kumar, *Portraying the President: The White House and the News Media* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 19-36. On Roosevelt, see Betty Houchin Winfield, *FDR and the News Media* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990.)

10.Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987): 4, 17-18, argues that modern presidential power developed through leadership of popular opinion by extra-constitutional means of communication.

11.Donald Ritchie, *Press Gallery: Congress and the Washington Correspondents* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991): 209-210.

12.On Harding, see Richard C. Frederick, ed. *Warren G. Harding: A Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992). The remaining Coolidge Papers are held by the Library of Congress and were examined in microfilm.

13.See generally Gerald J. Baldasty, *The Commercialization of News in the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

14. For discussions of the President-press relationship under McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson, see Robert C. Hilderbrand, *Power and the People: Executive Management of Public Opinion in Foreign Affairs, 1897-1921* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), and George Juergens, *News from the White House: The Presidential-Press Relationship in the Progressive Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

15.Stephen Ponder, "The President Makes News: William McKinley and the First White House Press Corps, 1897-1901," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24:4 (Fall 1994): 823-36.

16.Rodger Streitmatter, "Theodore Roosevelt: Public Relations Pioneer," *American Journalism* 1:2 (Spring 1990): 96-113.

17.Stephen Ponder, "'Nonpublicity' and the Unmaking of a President: William Howard Taft and the Ballinger-Pinchot Controversy of 1909-1910," *Journalism History* 19:4 (Winter 1994): 111-120.

18.For transcripts, see Robert C. Hilderbrand, ed., "The Complete Press Conferences," in *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, vol. 50 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).

19.The definitive examination of the wartime Committee on Public Information, the primary presidential propaganda agency, is that of Stephen Vaughn, *Holding Fast the Inner Lines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982).

20.Ritchie, *Press Gallery*, 208.

21.Baltimore *Sun* correspondent and syndicated columnist Frank R. Kent, in *The Great Game of Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1923), 210-3, estimated in the early 1920s that three-fourths of newspapers in the United States were strongly partisan, especially those in smaller communities. A few years later, another prominent correspondent, David Lawrence, "Reporting the Political News at Washington," *American Political Science Review* 22:4 (November 1928): 893-902, acknowledged that editorial control over political coverage was frequent but argued that the practice was in decline, at least at metropolitan newspapers.

22.During the 1920 campaign, Harding's publicity advisors included Will H. Hays, chairman of the Republican National Committee; Scott C. Bone, an editor of the Washington *Post*, and, in Marion, Ohio, Judson C. Welliver, a former correspondent and aide to Theodore Roosevelt. Welliver became an important advisor to both Harding and to Coolidge, for whom he became the first full-time White House speechwriter. See Wayne R. Whitaker, "Warren G. Harding and the press," Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio University, 1972, 68-78. Murray, *The Harding Era*, 50-52. Michael Medved, *The Shadow Presidents* (New York: Times Books, 1979), 169-70.

23. Robert T. Barry, "Marion 'Front Porch' Organization Survives Capitol's Whimsies," *Editor and Publisher* 53:43 (26 March 1921): 10, 22. Robert T. Barry, "Assemble Order of the Elephant in Washington Saturday Night," *Editor and Publisher* 53:44 (2 April 1921): 9. "Harding Elephants' Host," New York *Times*, 8 April 1921, 3. Whitaker, "Warren harding and the Press," 36-78. See also Pollard, *The Presidents and the Press*, 691-700, and Cornwell, *Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion*, 63-5.

24.The quotation is from "Harding in Capitol, Calls Upon Wilson," New York *Times*, 4 March 1921, 1.

25."Harding Will Call Special Session for April 4 or 11," New York *Times*, 8 March 1921, 1.

26.Karger to Harding, 21 January 1921, cited in Whitaker, "Warren G. Harding and the Press," 127-9, and reprinted in Appendix A.

27.The quotation is from Edward G. Lowry, *Washington Close-ups: Intimate Views of Some Public Figures* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1921), 18-20. See also Robert T. Barry, "President Strives for Working Agreement with Press," *Editor and Publisher* 53:41 (12 March 1921): 7.

28.The quotation is from Richard V. Oulahan, "Harding," Chapter 15, unpublished memoirs, Box 2, Oulahan Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library.

29.J. Frederick Essary, "President, Congress and the Press Correspondents," American Political Science Review 22:4 (November 1928): 902-9.

30.Once Wilson's presidential press conferences ended, however, the association became primarily a social group. See F.B. Marbut, News from the Capitol (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971), 172. "Praises 'We Boys' Ouster," Editor and Publisher 53:47 (23 April 1921): 40. Thomas L. Stokes, Chip Off My Shoulder (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1940, 70-71. Whitaker, "Warren G. Harding and the Press," 137.

31.Pollard, The Presidents and the Press, 704-5, attributes the decision to a misstatement about Japan during the Washington arms limitations talks of 1921. However, Cornwell, 66-67, said the decision to require written questions in advance had gone into effect three weeks earlier. Stokes, Chip Off My Shoulder, 107-8, a former United Press correspondent, describes a previous misunderstanding over Harding's position on the League of Nations.

32.Edward G. Lowry, "Mr. Harding Digging In," New Republic 26:337 (18 May 1921): 341-2.

33.Taft complained about the "sacrifice of dignity" involved. See Archie Butt to Mrs. Lewis F.B. Butt, 4 July 1909, in taft and Roosevelt: the Intimate Letters of Archie Butt, 2 vols. (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1930), I:134-5. Wilson rejected the pleas of his advisors to appear, along with Edith Galt Wilson, in a wartime promotional film on conserving food. See Wilson to Rudolph Forster, 9 August 1917, in Francis William O'Brien, ed. The Hoover-Wilson Wartime Correspondence (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1974), 56-8.

34.Lowry, "Mr. Harding Digging In," 342.

35.Cornwell, Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion, 68.

36.Sam W. Bell, "Editor Harding Fails to Win a Place on Washington Golf Team," Editor and Publisher 55:1 (3 June 1922): 16.

37."Harding Says Hobby is to Revive Hope," New York Times, 8 March 1921, 4.

38."Harding Declares Return to Normalcy Big Result of Year," New York Times, 5 March 1922, 1.

39.See, for example, "Harding and Davis Laud Editor's Work," New York Times, 27 April 1921, 10, a story for the presidential statement sent to the annual directors' luncheon of the Associated Press. "Harding Lauds Reporters," New York Times, 26 April 1922, 3, reflects a similar statement sent to a dinner of the American Newspapers Publishers Association.

40."No Banker Swayed Him, Says Harding," New York Times, 29 April 1923, 1.

41.William Allen White, A Puritan in Babylon: The Story of Calvin Coolidge (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 230.

42."The President," Editor and Publisher 56:10 (4 August 1921): 26.

43.Sam Bell, "Ours Was the Honor of the President's Requiem," Editor and Publisher 56:11 (11 August 1923, 5-6.

44.At least part of the continuity was attributable to Harding publicist Judson C. Welliver, who stayed on to advise Coolidge. In a June 1925 listing of White House staff, Welliver was described as a "special employee," whose $7,500 a year salary equalled that of Everett Sanders, who was then Coolidge's secretary, or chief of staff. See Commerce file, Reel 7, Coolidge Papers in microfilm.

45.Robert T. Barry, "President Strives for Working Relationship with Press," Editor and Publisher 53:41 (12 March 1921): 7.

46."Correspondents Hear Coolidge in First Speech as President," New York Times, 5 August 1923, 1, and "Coolidge Meets 150 Correspondents," New York Times, 15 August 1923, 3. Coolidge later wrote, in The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corp., 1929), 183-4, that the applause was one of his most pleasant memories of the presidency.

47.The quotations are from Frederick William Wile to Calvin Coolidge, 17 August 1923, File 36, Reel 39, Calvin Coolidge Papers in microfilm, Library of Congress.

48.Coolidge was aware that his remarks were likely to turn up in print, regardless of the ground rules of presidential anonymity. See "Coolidge Declines to Revive Aninias Club; Will Ignore All Purporting to Quote Him," New York Times, 22 September 1923, 1.

49.Coolidge, The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge, 215-6.

50.See "Memorandum of questions which may be put to the President at this afternoon's press conference," 12 June 1925 and 16 June 1925, in File 36, Reel 39, Coolidge Papers in microfilm. The same file contains written questions submitted by correspondents in 1928-9.

51.Robert Barry, "'Silent Cal' Cause Dearth of News," Editor and Publisher 56:19 (6 October 1923): 12.

52.Philip Schuyler, "What Press Conferences Mean to Washington Correspondents," Editor and Publisher 56:50 (10 May 1924), 3. For partial transcripts of Coolidge's press conferences, see Howard H. Quint and Robert H. Ferrell, eds. The Talkative President: The Off-the-Record Press Conferences of Calvin Coolidge (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1964).

53.For a caustic reference, see Alfred H. Kirchhofer, "Coolidge and 'Spokesman' Satisfied with Summer White House News," Editor and Publisher 59:10 (31 July 1926): 6.

54.For a selection of the correspondents' views on the issue, see J. Bart Campbell, "White House Rules Out Stenographers," Editor and Publisher 58:5 (27 June 1925): 14. David Lawrence, "President Coolidge's Step Backward in Official Press Relationship," Editor and Publisher 58:6 (4 July 1925): 3, 12. Raymond Clapper, "White House spokesman Mystery Stirs Senate Curiosity at Last," Editor and Publisher 59:34 (15 January 1927): 15. Willis Sharp, "President and Press," Atlantic Monthly 140:2 (August 1927): 239-245. Charles Willis Thompson, Presidents I've Known and Two Near Misses (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1929), 380-2.

55.Bart Campbell, "Barton Interview Not News Matter, Coolidge Tells Correspondents," Editor and Publisher 59:19 (2 October 1926): 3, 10. Robert L. Bishop, "Bruce Barton: Presidential Stage Manager," Journalism Quarterly 43:1 (Spring 1966): 85-9.

56.Clapper, "White House Spokesman Mystery Stirs Senate Curiosity at Last," 15.

57.Willis Sharp, "President and Press," Atlantic Monthly 140:2 (August 1927), 239-245. Although Herbert Hoover promised to end the "spokesman" system after he was elected President in 1928, it was significantly curtailed only under Franklin D. Roosevelt.

58.For examples of association and Gridiron meetings that Coolidge attended, see "Daugherty Puts Honor Above Office," New York Times, 9 March 1924, 1. J. Bart Campbell, "Coolidge Beams on White House Men at Annual Press Banquet," Editor and Publisher 57:144 (28 March 1925): 29. "Gridiron's History Reviewed by Depew," New York Times, 24 April 1925, 10. "Coolidge is Guest of News Writers," Editor and Publisher 58:42 (12 March 1926): 40.

59."Coolidge Declares Non-Interference His Foreign Policy," New York Times, 9 April 1926, 1.

60."Coolidge's Party for Editors Filmed," Editor and Publisher 57:32 (3 January 1925): 34. For William Allen White's account of the voyage, see White, A Puritan in Babylon, vi-xiii.

61.David Lawrence, one of the correspondents on the January 1925 voyage, wrote later that Coolidge went further than previous presidents in his solicitousness toward working newspapermen. See Lawrence, "The President and the Press," Saturday Evening Post 200:9 (27 August 1927): 27, 117-8.

62."Coolidge Narrowly Escapes Bad Fall," New York Times, 10 July 1925, 1. Despite the misleading headline, the bulk of the story was a detailed description of the Coolidges' hospitality on the presidential yacht.

63.See, for example, "Coolidge Urges Obedience to Law," New York Times, 29 August 1923, 19, a message to the Southern Newspaper Publishers Association. "Coolidge for a New Arms Conference," New York Times, 23 April 1924, 1, a speech to the Associated Press annual luncheon. "Coolidge Declares Press Must Foster America's Idealism," New York Times, 18 January 1925, 1, to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. "News Service Binds People of Americas, Coolidge Tells Press Congress," Editor and Publisher 58:46 (10 April 1925): 23, 66.

64."'Values of Advertising Underestimated' -- Coolidge," Editor and Publisher 59:23 (30 October 1926): 3. Stephen Fox, The Mirror Makers New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 97.

65.Philip Schuyler, "Coolidge to Open New Newspaper Plant in Wall Street's Back Yard," Editor and Publisher 59:15 (28 August 1926: 3, 22.

66.For the Cabinet response to Harding's instructions, see Stephen Ponder, "Cabinet Publicity in the 1920s: Herbert Hoover and the Department of Commerce," paper presented to Western Journalism Historians Conference, University of California, Berkeley, February 1995.

67. See also "Senators Beat Red Sox, 6-2, Before President and Mrs. Coolidge," New York Times, 13 April 1927, 21. For a description of Coolidge's extensive publicity activity during his summer vacation in South Dakota in 1927, see Claude M. Fuess, Calvin Coolidge: The Man From Vermont (Boston: Little, Brown, 1940), 390-1.

68."Coolidge for a New Arms Conference," New York Times, 23 April 1924, 1.

69.Louise M. Benjamin, "Broadcast Campaign Precedents from the 1924 Presidential Election," Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media 31:4 (Fall 1987): 449-460.

70."Coolidge Cuts Off Inaugural Pomp," New York Times, 11 February 1925, 1.

71.Cornwell, Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion, 89-94.

72.Lindsay Rogers, The American Senate (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1926), 215-41.

73.Ted Curtis Smythe, "The Reporter, 1880-1900: Working Conditions and Their Influence on News," Journalism History 7 (1980): 1-10.

74.Kernell, Going Public, 58-60.

75.Knebel, "The Placid Twenties," 65-66.

76.See Memorandum, Paul Croghan to Christian A. Herter, 18 April 1921, Commerce Department-Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Croghan, P.J., 1921-22 File, Box 135, Commerce Papers, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library.

77.The weekly trade journal, Editor and Publisher, in particular, became a forum for journalists' complaints. Beginning in 1921, the journal assigned a correspondent to furnish frequent, detailed accounts of encounters between the President and the correspondents.

78.The quotation is from Olive Ewing Clapper, Washington Tapestry (New York: Whittlesey House, 1946): 67.

79.The quotations are from "Press Agent Urged as Harding Adjunct," New York Times, 3 April 1923, 1. Oulahan believed that Harding was simply too modest. "He will not should loud in a loud shouting age," Oulahan wrote in "Harding," Chapter 15, unpublished memoirs, Box 2, Oulahan Papers. See "Harding Puts End to Publicity Plan," New York Times, 5 April 1923, 2. "No Publicity Agent," New York Times, 11 April 1923, 16.

80.The quotation is from Stokes, Chip Off My Shoulder, 138-9.

81.Frank R. Kent, "Mr. Coolidge," American Mercury II:8 (August 1924): 385-390. For other comments critical of the correspondents' role in the creation of "Silent Cal," see Delbert Clark, Washington Dateline (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1941), 62-66; Leo Rosten, The Washington Correspondents (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937), 28-29.

Construction of a Gay Image in the Washington Press: 1943-1970

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Construction of a Gay Image in the Washington Press: 1943-1970

Abstract:

One of the earliest references to homosexuality in Washington newspapers appeared in the Sunday Star in January 1943. The unheralded article about the military's effort to weed out homosexual recruits provided one of the public's first glimpses of the otherwise closeted sexual minority. It also marked the beginning of the construction of a public image of homosexuality in the nation's capital.

The purpose of this paper is to trace the coverage of homosexuals in Washington newspapers from 1943 through the beginning of the gay liberation movement in 1970. Given modern concepts of agenda-setting, the paper suggests that the antihomosexual attitudes of police and McCarthy era politicians shaped coverage of homosexuals until the early 1960s when homosexuals began to protest the antihomosexual hiring practices of the Federal government. The paper concludes that Washington newspapers may have been the first newspapers in the nation to abandon the negative, stereotypical image that characterized news coverage of homosexuality because of the early visibility of homosexual activists.

Construction of a Gay Image in the Washington Press: 1943-1970

In January 1943, the Sunday Star gave its readers an unusual glimpse of what life was like for homosexuals during World War Two. Complete with Defense Department photographs of a Navy induction center, the full-page story provided a platform for military psychiatrists to publicize their efforts to weed homosexuals out of the military. They described homosexuals as "psychopathic" individuals whose response to the strain of war "may be just enough to tip the youth over the border of mental health.''[2]

The story was particularly unusual because before the late 1940s, mainstream newspapers scrupulously avoided any mention of sex. Editors were concerned that the topic would offend readers and drive off advertisers. Most of all they were afraid of a backlash if parents suddenly found their children reading about sex in the family newspaper. Their sensitivities were only heightened if the news involved homosexuals. As a result, about the only mention of homosexuals in American newspapers during World War II was in the context of how they were unfit for military service.[1]

The purpose of this paper is to describe how newspapers in Washington, D.C., portrayed homosexuals from 1943 through 1970 and how their approach to the subject evolved as homosexuals became more open. The paper suggests that Washington newspapers played a critical role in creating and fostering city's hostile attitude toward homosexuals but later played a critical role in enlightening the public.

Public Opinion and the Press

In the early 1940s when Washington newspapers began to mention homosexuals, the news media's influence over public opinion was only beginning to be understood. Journalist-philosopher Walter Lippmann had speculated in 1922 that newspapers created images in readers' minds that became reality, regardless of where the image was accurate or not (Lippmann, 1922).[2]

There was little tangible evidence to support Lippmann's theory until the early 1970s. They provided the first measurable evidence (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) that while the media could not tell people what to think, they were strikingly successful in telling readers what to think about (Cohen, 1963). This was a foreign concept in the 1940s when articles in Washington newspapers began to create a public image of homosexuals.[3]

Before the advent of television in the 1950s, the public relied on newspapers for an understanding of the world beyond their own experience. Washington has long been one of the most competitive cities for news in the nation. In the early 1940s the city had four daily newspapers that sold in excess of 800,000 copies.[4] The Star was second only to the Times-Herald in terms of circulation and well ahead of the city's other two dailies, the Washington Post and the Daily News. The readership went well beyond the average citizen, it included presidents, members of Congress, Supreme Court justices--opinion leaders of all kinds. Therefore, the images created by the city's newspapers went beyond influencing public opinion, by extension these images influenced the shaping and justification of public policy.

In the case of homosexuals, the end of World War II brought a shift in how they were portrayed in the news. Homosexuality was more often reflected on the crime pages such as the small articles in Washington newspapers that described groups of men who were arrested engaging in sex in the shadowy areas of Lafayette Park across Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House. Where the newspapers had mentioned occasional arrests dating back to the 1920s, it wasn't until the 1940s that they began to report mass arrests.[5]

"**LAFAYETTE PARK CLEANUP RESULTS IN 41 ARRESTS**," read a July 1947 headline in the Star. "What police termed a 'routine cleanup' resulted in the arrest of 41 men in Lafayette park across from the White House between 10 p.m., yesterday and 6 a.m. today," the brief article explained. The raid had been ordered "just to see who the men were," said Lt. Roy Blick, head of the city's vice squad.

The next morning, the Washington Post carried a similar account, including a description of how police had shuttled men from Lafayette Park to the city jail throughout the night. "Those picked up listed occupations varying from cooks and busboys to 'manager,'" it said. "One described himself as a 'billiard player.'"[6] But there were no comments from any of the men, nor did the articles explain why the police felt compelled to herd citizens out of a public park to let them know they were unwelcome.

Washington newspapers began to report crime stories in greater detail when the city found itself in the midst of a crime wave in the late 1940s. The articles included more details from police records, including the names, ages and home addresses of

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men who were arrested on morals charges. As the police cracked down, the city's newspapers applauded their efforts. "**'1-MAN VICE SQUAD' ARRESTS EIGHT MORE**," read the headline on a small Post story on September 19, 1948. The article praised a handsome young undercover District police officer who had become the city's "most successful weapon in combating vice" while giving the impression that all homosexuals were criminals.

"It was awful," said Ben Bradlee, who began his career at the Post as an $80 a week police reporter in 1948. "The only vice they went after was gays and they made sure the press heard about it," he recalled in a recent interview. "It was a much more competitive environment then and police reporters were especially competitive. We grabbed at anything. It was like feeding the seals."[7]

Shattering the Taboo

In 1948 American newspapers found themselves torn between their puritanical silence on sex and their obligation to cover news. The catalyst was the eight-hundred-page book Sexual Behavior in the Human Male by Alfred Kinsey. When it suddenly burst onto bestseller lists, editors found themselves in a quandary over how to report the phenomenon without offending their readers. The Raleigh Times rejected a wire service report but told readers they could order a copy by mail. Its switchboard was flooded with more than 900 requests in the first week. The New York Times rejected an advertisement from the book's publisher.

When copies arrived at Washington bookstores in January 1948, the only newspaper to mention them was the Daily News, a lively tabloid owned by the Scripts-Howard newspaper chain. The newspaper carried a three part series that had moved across the United Press wire service. "**DESPITE MORE PETTING, WOMEN ARE STILL AS VIRTUOUS, BOOK CLAIMS**," read the headline on one installment. But even the Daily News was cautious. None of the stories ran on the front page, and each included a disclaimer emphasizing Kinsey's credentials as an Indiana University professor of zoology.[8] (The Daily News went out of business in 1972.)

In its first week in Washington bookstores, Kinsey's book sold so briskly that store owners ran out of copies for their show windows. But the Star, the Post and the Herald-Tribune ignored it.[9] A week later, however, the Post gave it accolades in an editorial: "Dr. Kinsey offers no moral judgements or recommendations. He has only undertaken to supply the scientific knowledge on which social and legal action can be based instead of depending as such action has largely depended in the past, on group mores, handed down taboos, old wives' talks and back-fence whisperings."[10]

The conservative Star, on the other hand, printed a stinging criticism of the book by syndicated columnist Dorothy Thompson. She wrote: "Dr. Kinsey's report, while it may be corrective of attitudes having no relationship to reality, also hold the danger of being used to justify unbridled license... If this interpretation is drawn from a report so dubiously representative, its results may be more evil than good."[11]

But none of Washington's daily newspapers mentioned the most controversial aspect of Kinsey's book: that half the men interviewed had acknowledged erotic responses to other men, 37 percent had experienced orgasm during at least one post adolescent homosexual encounter, and 4 percent were exclusively homosexual throughout adulthood. The research showed that homosexuality was more prevalent in American society than anyone had ever thought. For the press this type of information remained taboo.

The Star, for one, was more concerned about the city's crime wave and launched a crusade to have the criminal statutes toughened. The centerpiece of its campaign was a five series by Washington attorney A. J. Spero that ran on the editorial page. Headlined "**SEX CRIME AND CRIMINALS,**" the first installment described the magnitude of the problem, citing police figures showing that sex crimes had climbed by 400 percent in 1946-47 compared with the years preceding World War Two.

In part two, Spero identified the primary offender as the "degenerate sex offender," a category that included homosexuals. He wrote: "To the psychiatrist, the offenses which arouse the public to indignation are an indication of illness in the same way that a running nose is an indication of a bad cold."[12] Congress clamped down by passing the Miller Act which tightened penalties, especially in crimes involving children, "sodomy and perverted practices," and repeat offenders. In some cases, the law mandated commitment to St. Elizabeths Hospital.[13]

Homosexuality in the McCarthy Era

The press's inability to grapple with homosexuality only worsened in early 1950. Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy triggered headlines nationwide when he alleged that communists had infiltrated the State Department. Only days later Republican Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire echoed McCarthy's concerns over national security and expanded the list of suspects to include homosexuals.

Bridges raised the subject during a routine Senate hearing when he asked Secretary of State Dean Acheson how many State Department employees had been dismissed for security reasons. Uncertain of the answer, Acheson turned to Under Secretary of State John Peurifoy who blurted out, "Ninety-one persons in the shady category, most of them homosexuals." The stunning comment was the first public acknowledgment that the decade-long purge of homosexuals from the military had been extended to include all federal employees.

The significance of Peurifoy's comment was not immediately clear to the cadre of reporters who covered the hearing. The Post buried it in the final paragraph of a long story about a separate hearing on Acheson's defense of Alger Hiss, a State Department official who was accused of treason. The Times-Herald, the city's largest circulation newspaper, took a similar approach but carried the news about homosexuals a section of the story that appeared on the front page. "In the last three years, charges of unfitness for office have been leveled against 565 State department employees... With the exception of 91 individuals, designated as homosexuals or otherwise morally unfit, those permitted to resign were "security risks."[14] (From 1951 to 1954, the Times-Herald was owned by Chicago Tribune publisher Colonel Robert R. McCormick, an ardent defender of McCarthy's anticommunist crusade.)

In response, the Senate launched an investigation into the "Employment of Homosexuals and Other Sex Perverts in Government" and set off a rash of publicity. Behind the scenes, District police official Lt. Roy Blick, head of the vice squad, fueled the hysteria with wild descriptions of sex orgies involving ranking officials at government agencies. Blick's antihomosexual campaign was rivaled only by J. Edgar Hoover's on a national level. Like the FBI director, Blick maintained detailed lists of homosexuals and suspected homosexuals living in the Washington area which he would use whenever they helped him make his case against the homosexual menace, a description that echoed through the press.

"**SENATORS QUIZ D.C. COPS IN SECRET PROBE**," read an eight-column banner headline across the front page of the March 24, 1950. The story stemmed from closed door testimony that had been given by Blick and Detective Sgt. James K. Hunter of the police department's "Red Squad." Reporter Bert Wissman only heightened the intrigue by describing the atmosphere as "the most complete 'no comment' curtain veteran reporters at the sessions on Capitol Hill can remember."

Despite the blackout, details of Blick's testimony turned up on page one of the next day's Times-Herald: "**400 PERVERTS IN U.S. JOBS HERE NAMED**." "Many on the list are reported to be men in key jobs where they had access to confidential information vital to the national defense," the story said. Blick had turned over dossiers on each of the 400 during the secret session. The article went on to say that the city's vice squad was investigating "35 or 40 known perverts" who had participated in a sex orgy in the home of an important State department official. "Committee members were reported to have been shocked to learn that one man in a key government job, who was arrested in the commission of a sex crime in Lafayette park more than two years ago, is still holding his post," it said.

"I don't remember seeing anything in the newspapers that I identified with, or reflected the homosexual men and women I knew," said Jack Nichols, one of the early leaders of Washington's gay rights movement and a cofounder of the Washington Mattachine Society, an organization that was committed to winning political rights for homosexuals. "People were not out in the sense that they are out today, but there were several gay bars downtown. There was certainly a visible gay community forming--if anyone looked for it."[15]

Although some journalists may have been aware of Washington's burgeoning homosexual community, the conventions of objective journalism dictated that they base their stories on information supplied by police, psychiatrists, politicians and other "official" sources. In the press their characterizations of homosexuals as villains who were lurking behind every shadow became fact. **"SENATORS PUSH STUDY OF PERVERT PROBLEMS"** read a Star headline. **"PERVERT EXPOSE MAY GO TO SENATE FLOOR,"** a Daily News headline said. **"3750 PERVERTS HOLD U.S. JOBS IN CAPITOL, SENATE PROBERS SAY"** said the Post.[16]

Most of the accusations were aimed at male homosexuals but a bizarre story in the March 29, 1950, Herald-Tribune accused Russian agents of enticing women employees of the State department into "a life of Lesbianism." "The disclosure was made by a member of the Senate District appropriations subcommittee, who said he had been informed several parties had been held in plus surroundings in the Washington area at which homosexuals had staged erotic demonstrations," it said.[17]

"We never got any specific instructions on how to handle the subject; it just never came up," recalled Sidney Epstein in a recent interview. Epstein joined the Times-Herald as a reporter in 1937 and became the newspaper's city editor from 1951 until 1954 when it was sold to the Post. "There was a Greek restaurant next door that had a club for homosexuals downstairs. The guys from the Times-Herald never went downstairs--that was a no-no--but it was obvious that Washington had one of the biggest collections of homosexuals in the country. We could see it from the sidewalk."[18]

The dark atmosphere for Washington homosexuals turned even more chilling in May 1950 when the FBI began sending lists of sex offenders to Federal agencies. The Star buried the announcement on page A-4. But the Post carried it on the front page. It said: "The names of about 200 sex perverts in Government jobs here--men and women alike--have been turned over to their employing agencies by the Civil Service Commission. Many of them either have been or will be fired as unsuited for Government work."[19]

Kinsey never estimated the number of gays and lesbians in the United States but police in Washington and several cities exploited his data to justify their witch hunts. **"IF DR. KINSEY'S SEX DATA APPLY, THERE ARE 192 IN CONGRESS AND HALF MILLION IN CIVIL SERVICE WHO ARE BAD SECURITY RISKS** read a headline on the front page of the June 22, 1950, Daily News. "The Senate subcommittee investigating employment of 'homosexuals and other moral perverts' by the Federal Government had better read the Kinsey report before it goes very far," the article by science reporter Wadsworth Likely began.[20]

In April 1953, the government's unofficial ban against homosexuals became public policy. "President Eisenhower yesterday announced a new and strict security program to rid the Government of all Federal employees of questionable reliability, character or loyalty," the Post reported on its front page. The State Department alone fired 99 employees for "homosexual deviations" during 1953 and put another 278 under investigation. Between 1947 and 1953, homosexuality was cited in the firing of 425 State Department employees.

In 1955, Daily News reporter Anthony Lewis won a Pulitzer Prize for his series of articles on a 23-year veteran of the federal work force who had been accused of being a security risk and fired. But the news media paid little attention to thousands of individuals who were accused of being homosexual and fired, or denied employment. "A lot of them weren't identified; they were just numbers," recalled former Star reporter L. Edgar Prina in a recent interview. "I was never asked to find any of them. A lot of them would not want to be identified because if they were they wouldn't be able to get a job elsewhere."[21]

"I remember asking a State Department officer how they had determined that these people were homosexual," said former Post reporter Murray Marder, head of the newspaper's "red beat." "He told me it was very simple. They were called in and told that there were these accusations against them. They were asked if they were prepared to go to trial and invariably they resigned. This confirmed my suspicions about how these numbers were being racked up. Undoubtedly some of them had to be innocent mathematically but the threat of having to go through the proceeding was enough to wipe them out."

The stigma associated with homosexuals made them an impossible subject for the press to cover accurately, regardless of how dedicated journalists were to the journalistic principles of truth and accuracy. The hostile tone of the publicity frightened homosexual men and women even deeper into hiding, making them even more invisible and misunderstood.

Exploding the Homosexual Myth

The witch hunt for communists faded in the late-1950s. But homosexuals continued to be targets for the police and the press. "**FAIRFAX POLICE DRIVE NETS 65 HOMOSEXUALS**," read a Washington Star headline in 1962.

"We had a reporter who got caught by Blick's vice squad in the early 60s, and just disappeared," recalled former Star police reporter Rupert Welch. "He never came back to the office. A few days later he sent a telegram from Chicago saying he had resigned." Welch knew the man had been arrested on morals charges after he checked the arrest logs in Blick's office.[22]

The first break in the long sting of negative headlines came in the summer of 1963. In an odd set of circumstances, a controversy erupted over the fund-raising activities of the Mattachine Society of Washington, the city's early gay rights organization. Texas Congressman John Dowdy was infuriated when he learned that the District's Department of Licensing issued the organization a permit to solicit donations. Legally, he could not single out one organization so he crafted legislation that would make it more difficult for any unpopular organization to qualify for a fund raising permit.

But Dowdy's strategy backfired. On the eve of hearings on the proposal, the Post printed an editorial defending the Mattachine Society. "We think that the organization has a clear right to make a plea for public support," the editorial said. The Star struck a similar note on its editorial page. Headlined **"UNCHARITABLE AMENDMENT."** the Star said, "If this ill-advised amendment is brought before the House on Monday, as expected, we trust the members will speed it to its rightful destination--the wastebasket," it concluded.

Both Washington newspapers kept the debate in the public spotlight as Mattachine Society president Franklin Kameny appeared before the subcommittee to testify. A former government astronomer, he was fired from the Army Map Service after investigators found that he had been arrested a year earlier on a vague charge involving lewd conduct. The firing effectively barred him from ever holding any federal job.

Unlike many who faced similar accusations, the feisty Harvard Ph.D. fought for his reinstatement through administrative appeal, and then in the courts. But by 1961 when the Supreme Court refused to hear his case it was clear that he had lost his battle. Soon after that he and a handful of other gay men formed the Mattachine Society of Washington.

In August 1963, Dowdy's subcommittee called Kameny to testify. The hearing was a rare opportunity for a Washington homosexual to bask in the media spotlight. It was a chance to publicize gay rights, promote the Mattachine Society, and reach closeted homosexuals who had never heard of the organization.

Kameny became the first open homosexual to testify before a Congressional committee. His appearance also marked the first attempt by Washington homosexuals to influence how they were being portrayed in the news.

Dowdy, on the other hand, used the hearings as a platform to rail against bestiality, incest, and homosexual orgies. Both the Post and the Star covered them. "Down in my country if you call a man a 'queer' or a 'fairy' the least you can expect is a black eye," Dowdy bellowed at Kameny. In response, the Mattachine leaders pointed out that Texas also had homosexuals. Dowdy responded, "Maybe, but I never heard anyone brag about it."18

Dowdy's bill was doomed to defeat after the American Civil Liberties Union and several family services agencies testified against the proposal. Kameny facetiously suggested that the Mattachine Society give Dowdy an award for the year's biggest contribution to gay rights.[23]

Playing to the Press

After chalking up their first successful foray into the media spotlight, members of the Mattachine Society of Washington were ready to forge ahead. In October 1964, they joined with several other homophile organizations in choosing Washington as the site for a conference on gay rights. (Lesbian and gay rights organizations during the 1950s and 60s used the term "homophile" to indicate that their membership rolls included homosexuals and supportive heterosexuals.)

For a time it looked like their conference would have to be cancelled when several hotels turned down their application for meeting space. But finally the Sheraton Park Hotel on Connecticut Avenue agreed. Kameny sent press releases to Washington newspapers and the bureaus of various out-of-town newspapers. To lure the reporters to attend, Kameny organized a press conference and convinced the Civil Liberties Union (a forerunner of the American Civil Liberties Union) to release a report condemning the government's ban on homosexuals. Both the Post and the Star sent reporters.

During the press conference, the gays encouraged the reporters to talk with members individually and learn what life was like for everyday homosexuals. Clark P. Polack of Philadelphia's Janus Society explained, "If someone came through the door now, I bet you couldn't tell whether he was one of us." After hearing that, each reporter was quick to stress his or her professional affiliation whenever anyone came into the room.[24]

The next day, the Post carried a story on page B-10 of its local news section by reporter Jean White. "The fact that the four participating organizations can hold a public conference in a big-city hotel is considered a significant accomplishment in itself by the organization's leaders," it pointed out.[25] The Star carried a similar story: "The National Capital Area Civil Liberties Union has asked the Civil Service Commission to end its ban on homosexuals for jobs." But neither of the articles contained any interviews with a homosexual who had been fired from the government, not even with Kameny.

Four days after the gays' conference, Washington newspapers carried a grim reminder of the government's hypersensitivity over homosexuals and national security. **"JENKINS, AIDE TO LBJ, RESIGNS**

AFTER ARREST," read a page one headline in the Post. Walter Jenkins a top aide and confidant of President Lyndon Johnson had been arrested for making "indecent gestures" toward another man in the rest room of the Washington YMCA. His arrest had gone unnoticed by reporters because Jenkins had given police his middle name and claimed his was employed as a "clerk." But an anonymous tipster called newspaper editors and told them that a White House official had been arrested on morals charges and that the man had faced similar charges five years earlier.

Gays were startled and angered by the spate of coverage that surged into the press. "So far as the offense is a private one, humanity requires that the shock and revulsion of disclosure be tempered with charity," the Post said in a patronizing editorial. New York gay activist Randy Wicker wanted to organize protests outside the Washington FBI headquarters but Kameny talked him out of it.[26] Kameny had already devised a strategy for generating publicity and it did not include picketing the FBI to protest the arrest of a closeted married man who cruised public rest rooms. From his perspective, gays and lesbians should concentrate on gaining protections for law abiding homosexuals who continued to be barred from holding government jobs, only because they were gay.

Despite the hostile tone of the coverage, Jenkins's arrest may have marked a turning point for Washington newspapers. Kameny and other open homosexuals had already begun to put a face on homosexuality that defied the popular myth that they were a social menace. The Jenkins incident underscored their contention that homosexuality posed no security risk as the government had long contended.

Only days after Jenkins's arrest Washington Post managing editor Alfred Friendly turned to reporter Jean White and assigned her to write a major feature on homosexuals. An avid reader of the New Yorker, Friendly had been impressed with the magazine's willingness to examine issues in long, interpretive articles, including a three-part series of the book Silent Spring by Rachael Carson.

White began researching the subject in newspaper's morgue but quickly discovered that little had been written by the Post or any other major publication. She contacted some of the gay men and lesbians she had met at the homophile conference a month earlier at the Sheraton Park. Friendly suggested that she call a Washington psychiatrist who explained that there was a division among the ranks on whether homosexuality was a mental illness. She also visited several gay and lesbian bars in Washington and New York. "My only scary moment was at a lesbian bar," she explained in a 1996 interview. "These women really hated men and I had gone with a male photographer. At one point we discovered that some of them carried knives in their boots. I remember feeling like I might have to protect my photographer."[27]

In January 1966, three months after Walter Jenkins's arrest, the Post carried a five-part series, **THOSE OTHERS: A REPORT ON HOMOSEXUALITY**. It was one of the first in-depth features on lesbians and gays in any newspaper in the nation. Rather than discuss homosexuality as a crime or an illness, the series described a variety of everyday conflicts faced by homosexuals: the causes of homosexuality, discrimination against homosexuals, laws against homosexual acts, and homosexuality and the military.

"This series of articles would not have been written five years ago," the first installment began. "Then, a frank and open discussion of homosexuality would have been impossible... The conspiracy of the past nurtured myths, misconceptions, false stereotypes and feelings of disgust and revulsion. They still cloud any discussion of homosexuality. But more and more, recognition has come of a need to reappraise our laws--and our attitudes."

Not only was it ground breaking as a series, it was one of the most balanced reports on homosexuality to appear in the American press. While most newspapers reflected only the prevailing psychiatric view that homosexuality was an illness, the Post series included a minority view that considered homosexuals psychiatrically well adjusted. She wrote: "Many of the studies on homosexuality have been made among patients under treatment or men in prison. This has been a point of challenge by those who do not hold to the view that homosexuality is necessarily an emotional disorder."

The Ladder, the newsletter of the lesbian organization Daughter's of Bilitis, called the series "the most astute as well as most extensive coverage so far in U.S. papers." (An abbreviated version of it appeared in newspapers in several other newspapers, including the Post's sister newspaper, the Providence Sun-Journal in Rhode Island, and the Sun-Times in Chicago.)

Taking It to the Streets

Encouraged by the heightened press attention, Kameny and other members of the Mattachine Society recognized that time had come for a bold step that would call public attention to the government's discriminatory hiring policy, much as activists had in the civil rights movement. On April 17, 1965, a handful of neatly dressed men and women arrived at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue to stage the first White House protest for gay rights by an organization of homosexuals.

Undaunted by the uncertain consequences, Kameny notified the police and the press of their plans. As White House guards kept a watchful eye, several reporters scribbled on their notepads. A camera crew from WTOP (Ch. 9) took pictures. But the only coverage that appeared in the media was a single-column, six-paragraph article Washington Afro-American.[28]

Despite the lackadaisical response from the media, the gays staged a second White House protest a month later. This time stories appeared on wire services--Associated Press, United Press International, the French news agency Agence France Presse. Those reports generated small articles in several newspapers, including the New York Times and the Star. **"PICKETS DEMAND FAIR TREATMENT FOR HOMOSEXUALS,"** read Star's single column headline on May 30, 1965.[29]

In addition, a television crew distributed pictures to ABC affiliates in at least nine states. They showed a group of nine men and three women who were neatly dressed, holding hand-lettered signs protesting government discrimination. (Kameny insisted that the women wear skirts and men wear coats and ties because he felt that if they were going to protest employment practices, they must look employable.)

For the small group of protesters, the coverage was exhilarating. Through the summer and fall of 1965 they picketed a variety of government buildings, including the State Department and the Pentagon. But picketing was a contentious issue among gays. Some feared they would cut off communications channels if they openly challenged government officials and insisted that gays quietly negotiate their civil rights. Kameny justified the group's confrontational tactic, claiming that the antihomosexual policies of the government set the tone for private employers and reinforced prejudice throughout society. Moreover, he recognized that demonstrations were more likely to draw attention from media then polite letters requesting coverage.

In September 1965, the Civil Service Commission, the federal agency that set the federal government's hiring policies, reaffirmed its ban and the Mattachine Society picketed. The group of ten who had picketed the White House in April had grown to 45. Embarrassed by the unsightly picketing, the Civil Service Commission agreed to a meeting in which Kameny and other members pleaded their case. It marked the first time government officials ever had to try to justify their exclusion of homosexuals from federal employment.

The following April, however, a Commission letter informed the Mattachine Society that it had reaffirmed the ban. The Mattachine Society immediately sent copies of the letter to the media. **"U.S. STATES JOB POLICY TOWARD HOMOSEXUALS,"** the Star reported on April 20, 1964. "In a lengthy statement of U.S. employment policy, Macy placed known homosexual conduct in the same category as 'criminal or licentious heterosexual conduct" --

both of which, he said, would make a person unsuitable for government work," the article said.

The firing of homosexuals continued. In late 1967 the Star reported that of the 28 employees the State Department had fired, 25 of them were homosexuals.[30] But the discriminatory policy was coming under intense scrutiny in the courts. "**JOB DENIAL BY U.S. RULED IMPROPER**," read a Star headline on June 17, 1965. The case involved Bruce C. Scott, a Labor Department employee who had been questioned about homosexuality but refused to respond. Despite his 17 years with the department he was fired. At the urging of Franklin Kameny, Scott filed suit. After he lost his case in District Court, his victory in the Appeals Court set off headlines in Washington newspapers. "No federal court has gone as far as this opinion in strongly suggesting that homosexual conduct may not be an absolute disqualification for Government jobs."

Gay Lib and the Washington Press

In the summer of 1969 the homophile movement gave way to gay liberation outside New York's Stonewall Inn. Washington newspapers were not the only ones that underestimated the story. Even in New York newspapers either downplayed the incident by putting small stories on inside pages or they mocked the gays with headlines like one in the New York Daily News: "**QUEEN BEES ARE STINGING MAD**." Compared with inner-city riots in Los Angeles and other major cities during the mid-to-late 1960s, the uproar in Greenwich Village may have seemed insignificant. But it was the first time gays had resisted a long history of police harassment.

Washington Post reporter Nancy Ross learned of the riots from friends in New York and recognized that the tone among homosexuals was undergoing a major change. **"HOMOSEXUAL REVOLUTION"** read the headline above an October 1969 article by Ross on the front of the Post's Style section.[31] It began by describing how gays in San Francisco had forged an alliance with clergy, psychiatrists, lawyers, and other professionals, and how they had fought police in New York City. "Though few American heard of these incidents and fewer still participated, their significance should not be overlooked," it said. "Together they illustrate, on the one hand, the new openness, and on the other, the new militancy on the part of homosexuals..."

To tie the story into Washington, Ross explained that gays had protested at the White House and at several other government buildings. But she noted that Washington gays had not shown the militancy seen in New York and Los Angeles. "Homosexuality in the nation's capital remains largely underground, but an increasing number of cracks have appeared in the earth's surface," she wrote.

The Star seemed to awaken to gay liberation in late 1970 after an incident at the Zephyr Restaurant on Wisconsin Avenue in Northwest Washington. **"12 FROM GAY LIB FRONT RELEASED AFTER BRAWL"** read the November 29th headline. The fight erupted when the owner of the restaurant refused to serve several members of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF). The story was followed two months later by a major feature on the nascent gay liberation movement on the front page of its local section. Headlined **"THE NEW RADICALS,"** the article began by describing the incident at the restaurant, and then explained that GLF had grown out of the 1969

Stonewall Rebellion in New York.

Conclusion

The three decades between 1940 and 1970 witnessed a dramatic shift in how homosexuals were portrayed in Washington newspapers, in both tone and substance. While news editors were slow to recognize the city's burgeoning homosexual community in the 1940s and 1950s, Washington newspapers began to reverse their approach in the early 1960s when gays began to speak out against the government's antihomosexual hiring ban. An attack by a member of Congress and hearings beneath the Capitol dome provided a unique platform for homosexuals to state their case and gain press attention that alluded homosexuals in other cities.

While the Kinsey study had prompted the press to reevaluate their Puritanical approach to sex, history suggests that the McCarthy era may have set the stage for a similar awakening among the Washington press to how they covered homosexuals. Given the government's role as a major employer, the witch hunts took on an added importance in the Washington press. Franklin Kameny and others who identified themselves as victims of the government's discriminatory policy, personalized the government's impersonal statistics on firings. As a result, gays began to appear in the Washington press nearly a decade before newspapers in most other cities deemed them newsworthy.

In late 1969 and in the early 1970s as gay and lesbian activists in several cities protested newspaper coverage in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago, Washington gays were making inroads into the Washington press by cultivating relationships with reporters and editors who were willing to listen to them.

In the wake of the McCarthy era, Washington newspapers stopped referring to homosexuals as "degenerates" and "perverts" in the late 1950s and readily adopted "gay," the term preferred by gays and lesbians. Newspapers in several other cities, however, steadfastly clung to the more clinical term "homosexual," despite protests from gay and lesbian activists. (New York Times editors maintained an official ban against the term "gay" unless it was part of an official title or contained in a quote until 1987.)

While news coverage in the 1960s may not have been as extensive and as favorable as gays and lesbians would have preferred, Washington newspapers showed an unusual responsiveness to the emerging gay community. In the early 60s, the city newspapers were publishing gay writers' "letters to the editor" at a time when gay activists in New York and other major cities were submitting letters that never appeared.[32] Moreover, Washington newspapers were willing to raise some of the concerns of gays and lesbians in editorials. The Post and the Star were outspoken in their support of the Mattachine Society of Washington when they condemned attempts by a member of Congress tried to shut the organization down. Many American newspapers during that era would have considered such a position unthinkable.

By the mid-60s the Post and the Star were also editorializing against the government's anti-gay hiring ban. When the Civil Service Commission voted to reaffirm its ban against gay federal workers in 1964, the Post called its decision "misplaced morality." It was another five years before the advent of the gay liberation movement outside New York's Stonewall Inn. By then, Washington newspapers had established a pattern of coverage that recognized gays and lesbians as a segment of society that should be heard in the news.

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15. Jack Nichols, interview by the author, Feb. 23, 1996 (telephone).

16. Edward F. Ryan, "3750 Perverts Hold U.S. Jobs in Capitol, Senate Probers Say," Washington Post, Mar. 29, 1950.

17. Bert Wissman, "Reds Entice Women Here In Sex Orgies," Herald-Tribune, Mar. 29, 1950.

18. Sidney Epstein, interview by the author, Feb. 23, 1996 (telephone).

19. Jerry Kluttz, "Names of 200 Perverts Listed For Firing by U.S. Agencies," Washington Post, May 9, 1950.

20. Wadsworth Likely, "If Dr. Kinsey's Data Apply to U.S. Jobs...," Daily News, June 22, 1950.

21. L. Edgar Prina, interview by the author, Feb. 16, 1996

22. Rupert Welch, interview by the author, Feb. 20, 1996 (telephone).

23. John D'Emilio, Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of the Homosexual Minority, 1940-1970 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1983) 157.

24. Jean M. White, "Homosexuals Are in All Kinds of Jobs, Find Place in May Levels of Society," Washington Post, Feb. 2, 1965.

25. Jean White, "Homophile Groups Argue Civil Liberties," Washington Post, Oct. 11, 1964.

26. Toby Marotta, The Politics of Homosexuality (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 28.

27. Jean M. White, interview by the author, Feb. 14, 1996 (telephone).

28. The Insider, newsletter of the Mattachine Society of Washington, April 1965, from the files of Franklin Kameny.

29. "Pickets Demand Fair Treatment for Homosexuals," Washington Star, May 30, 1965.

30. "State Fired 28 As Security Risks," Evening Star, May 20, 1968.

31. Nancy Ross, "Homosexual Revolution," Washington Post, Oct. 25, 1969.

32. D'Emillio, 217-18.

Balancing Academic Freedom and Academic Image:

The North Carolina Speaker Ban, 1963-1968

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Abstract

In 1963, the North Carolina Legislature enacted a law restricting "known Communists and people who had pled the Fifth Amendment regarding Communist or subversive activites" from speaking on any state-supported college or university campus. The "gag law," as the media dubbed it, stifled free speech on the state's three university campuses and unleashed a floodgate of outrage from university leaders, students, alumni and members of the media. Through an analysis of speeches and presentations by university leaders, and news and editorial commentary in seven North Carolina newspapers and one television station, this paper examines the interaction of media and administrators as each worked toward the law's repeal.

Higher education has traditionally occupied a sanctified position in our society. With little interference from the courts, its members have enjoyed the academic freedom that is at the heart of intellectual pursuit and fundamental to the essence of college and university life. Yet, in the waning days of North Carolina's 1963 General Assembly, legislators suspended the rules and took just twenty-six minutes to pass a law that stifled free speech on the state's three university campuses and unleashed a floodgate of outrage from administrators, faculty, students, alumni and members of the media. Former State Representative Philip Godwin, sponsor of the bill, said that fears of Communist influence on the campuses sparked the speaker ban bill,[1] which stated:

> No college or university which receives any State funds in support thereof, shall permit any person to use the facilities of such college or university for speaking purposes, who:
>
> (1) Is a known member of the Communist Party;
>
> (2) Is known to advocate the overthrow of the Constitution of the United States or the State of North Carolina;
>
> 3) Has pleaded the Fifth Amendment in refusing to answer any question with respect to Communist or subversive connections or activities.[2]

Although the law reflected the "Red-phobia" of the times, there is evidence that right-wing legislators were more intent on curbing faculty and students' participation in civil rights protests than on banning Communist speakers, particularly on the Chapel Hill campus, known as a bastion of social and political liberalism in an otherwise conservative state.[3] The Speaker Ban Law was an overt display of legislators' antipathy toward the Chapel Hill campus and a wake-up call to campus administrators that the university's relationship with state government was troubled. It would take five years of effort and a federal court ruling before the issue was resolved.

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[1] "North Carolina People with Bill Friday," interview with former N.C. Rep. Phillip Godwin, Gates County (University of North Carolina Center for Public Television, 1994). Interview with Former State Representative Phillip Godwin, 15 July 1988, in Gillian D. Floren, "Speaking Freely, UNC-CH Administrators Respond to Freedom of Expression, 1963-1971," UNC-CH master's thesis, 1989.

[2] General Statutes of North Carolina, sec. 116-199 (1963).

Although the Speaker Ban Law has received the attention of political science and legal scholars,[4] no previous study has focused on University of North Carolina administrators' efforts from a public relations viewpoint. Freedom of expression was the issue, but the means of dealing with the issue involved classic public relations communication and give rise to questions addressed in this study: (1) What efforts were made by administrators to influence opinion about the Speaker Ban and work toward its repeal? (2) How did the media react to the ban? (3) In what ways, if at all, did efforts of university leaders and efforts of the media compliment each other as the controversy moved from the passing of the bill to the resulting court case?

Background and Method

In 1963, three universities comprised the University of North Carolina state university system, then called the Consolidated University: the State College in Raleigh, the College for Women in Greensboro, and The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In this paper, the system with be referred to as UNC, and the university at Chapel Hill will be referred to as UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, or Carolina.

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[3] William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 15 March, 1996.

[4] See William Bondurant, "The North Carolina Speaker Ban Law: A Study in Context," Kentucky Law Review, v. 55 (1966-76); Joseph Gusfield, "Student Protest and University Response." Annals of the American Academy of Political Science 395 (May 1971), 26-38.

William C. Friday was UNC system president during the speaker ban controversy. Until the fall of 1964, William B. Aycock was chancellor at Chapel Hill, followed by Paul F. Sharp until February 1966, and J. Carlyle Sitterson, until 1972. Together these men faced the ramifications of the ban while trying to preserve academic freedom at Chapel Hill. There is no question that Chapel Hill had been targeted by conservative legislators, but there is disagreement over what prompted the legislators' ire.[5]

The law, House Bill 1395, was written by Secretary of State Thad Eure and based on a similar law passed in Ohio.[6] Eure, Godwin, and other proponents of the law maintained that it was a travesty for Communists to be allowed to spread their doctrine on North Carolina campuses while American soldiers were fighting Communism in Vietnam.[7] They believed Carolina was a haven for Communists and Socialists, and, in fact, there was some basis for legislators' concerns. A Communist-front organization had sponsored the Conference on Freedom and the First Amendment in Chapel Hill, and alumnus Junius Scales had been convicted under the Smith Act in 1955.[8] In the fall, 1962, the Chapel Hill American Legion Post called for an investigation of alleged "Marxism" at UNC-CH. Two *Durham Herald* reporters who investigated the "red nest" found a handful of students who belonged to the Chapel Hill Progressive Labor Club, but concluded "it contains nothing more than this year's brood of fledgling left-wingers."[9] Together with Chapel Hill's tradition as a free-thinking institution, it was enough evidence for lawmakers to build a case for action.

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[5] See, for example, "North Carolina People with Bill Friday," interview with former N.C. Rep. Phillip Godwin, Gates County (University of North Carolina Center for Public Television, 1994); William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 15 March 1996; William B. Aycock, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 19 March 1996.

[6] "North Carolina People with Bill Friday," interview with former N.C. Rep. Phillip Godwin, Gates County (University of North Carolina Center for Public Television, 1994).

[7] Ibid.

[8] Sarah Emery, Blood on the Old Well, (Dallas: Prospect House, 1963), 205.

University administrators and their supporters, however, were convinced that the Speaker Ban Law was vindictively enacted, not because of Communist activity on campus, but because members of the university had championed the civil rights cause. Frank Porter Graham, former president of UNC, President Friday and Chancellor Aycock held reputations as liberal thinkers. Dr. Martin Luther King and poet Langston Hughes had lectured on the Carolina campus that spring, adding to tensions over racial issues. Legislators became incensed, however, when UNC students and at least one faculty member joined African-American picketers at the Sir Walter Raleigh Hotel, home to many legislators during the session. The *Chapel Hill Weekly* reported that demonstrators in the Sir Walter, "night Capital and home of the smoke-filled room," and in the "sacrosanct" restaurant in the new State House, incited fury among representatives and senators. "One legislator, in a fit of pique, threatened to cut off all university appropriations," the *Weekly* reported.[10] In his "Assembly Roundup," Raleigh *News & Observer* commentator Roy Parker, Jr. stated that the nightly demonstrations at the Sir Walter had gone on for six weeks, with legislators watching quietly. "They were not so (silent) when they gathered in the gleaming State House," he but concluded "it contains nothing more than this year's brood of fledgling left-wingers."[9] Together with Chapel Hill's tradition as a free-thinking institution, it was enough evidence for lawmakers to build a case for action.

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[9] Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 23 June 1963.

[10] Chapel Hill (N.C.) Weekly, 3 July 1963; reprinted in The Charlotte Observer, 4 July 1963. It should be noted that the 1963 General Assembly was generous in its appropriations and allocated $2,000,000 to the North Carolina Board of Science and Technology to assist in the development of scientific research, see William B. Aycock, "The Speaker Ban Law," address to the University of North Carolina Board of Trustees, 28 October 1963.

University administrators and their supporters, however, were convinced that the Speaker Ban Law was vindictively enacted, not because of Communist activity on campus, but because members of the university had championed the civil rights cause. Frank Porter Graham, former president of UNC, President Friday and Chancellor Aycock held reputations as liberal thinkers. Dr. Martin Luther King and poet Langston Hughes had lectured on the Carolina campus that spring, adding to tensions over racial issues. Legislators became incensed, however, when UNC students and at least one faculty member joined African-American picketers at the Sir Walter Raleigh Hotel, home to many legislators during the session. The *Chapel Hill Weekly* reported that demonstrators in the Sir Walter, "night Capital and home of the smoke-filled room," and in the "sacrosanct" restaurant in the new State House, incited fury among representatives and senators. "One legislator, in a fit of pique, threatened to cut off all university appropriations," the *Weekly* reported.[10] In his "Assembly Roundup," Raleigh *News & Observer* commentator Roy Parker, Jr. stated that the nightly demonstrations at the Sir Walter had gone on for six weeks, with legislators watching quietly. "They were not so (silent) when they gathered in the gleaming State House," he wrote. "The impact of the demonstrations was felt in the law-making process."[11]

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[9] Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 23 June 1963.

[10] Chapel Hill (N.C.) Weekly, 3 July 1963; reprinted in The Charlotte Observer, 4 July 1963. It should be noted that the 1963 General Assembly was generous in its appropriations and allocated $2,000,000 to the North Carolina Board of Science and Technology to assist in the development of scientific research, see William B. Aycock, "The Speaker Ban Law," address to the University of North Carolina Board of Trustees, 28 October 1963.

Whether the catalyst was Communists on campus or civil rights involvement, clearly Chapel Hill was out of step with many N.C. Legislators. Speaker ban supporter Jesse Helms, who broadcast his "Viewpoint" editorials daily over WRAL-TV in Raleigh, said the message was that "a substantial percentage of the citizens of North Carolina resented the then-existing liberal-left-wing atmosphere at the university system's Chapel Hill campus."[12]

By cloaking the resentment in Communism, legislators made it difficult for the university to defend itself. Thirty-three years later, Chancellor Aycock observed, "This legislation passed without any notice or opportunity to respond, and it was cast in such a form that if you were against the speaker ban, you were for communism,"[13] making it politically dangerous to voice doubts about the law. Not all political leaders were afraid to speak out, however. Senator Perry Martin of Northampton and Senator Lunsford Crew of Halifax voiced opposition when the bill was introduced, and at least four senators attempted to speak but were shouted down. [14] Thirteen senators and fourteen representatives joined in resolutions objecting the bill, and drew editorial commendation from the *Charlotte Observer*.[15] Representative Edward Hamlin later actively supported the university in campaign speeches, stating that the bill was so ill conceived that "this law, like buckshot, has splattered the whole spectrum of academic freedom, intellectual integrity, and the unfettered mind."[16]

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[11] Roy Parker, Jr., "Marchers' Footsteps Echoed in Assembly," News and Observer, 29 June 1963.

[12] Senator Jesse Helms, Washington, D.C., letter to author, 4 April 1996.

[13] William B. Aycock, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 19 March 1996.

[14] Charlotte Observer, 2 July 1963.

[15] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 26 June 1963.

The buckshot of this bill splattered the Consolidated University and, additionally, North Carolina's media, for whom freedom of expression is just as dear. This paper will examine the interaction of university leaders and eight North Carolina media at four key points in the speaker ban controversy, beginning with the passing of law in 1963. Next we will explore media coverage of the Britt Commission, created by the 1965 legislature to determine whether the controversial law should be retained, amended, or repealed. UNC-CH students fueled the third flash point on which this paper will focus. Student leader, intent on testing the law, invited to campus two speakers whose presence was unquestionably in violation of the speaker ban law. Finally, we will look at the interaction of university leaders and the media when federal judges ruled the law unconstitutional in 1968. The media included in this study are *The Chapel Hill Weekly*, the Raleigh *News and Observer*, the *Raleigh Times*, the *Charlotte Observer*, the *Greensboro Daily News*, the *Smithfield Herald*, and editorial comment on WRAL-TV.

Reaction to the "Gag Law"

Only two North Carolina journalists voiced substantial support of the speaker ban: Hoover Adams, editor of the newspaper in Dunn, N.C., and Jesse Helms, vice president of news, public affairs and programming at WRAL-TV in Raleigh. Of these two, Helms was the more vociferous and had a larger audience.[17] Nearly all the major newspapers strongly opposed what many journalists called the "gag law."[18] The *News and Observer* ran the first two articles about the speaker ban law on June 26, one giving minute-by-minute details of how swiftly and surreptitiously the bill passed, and one quoting Eure taking credit for writing the bill and for "catching Governor Terry Sanford unaware." Eure accurately predicted that Sanford and Friday would "attempt without success to have the bill reconsidered" the next day.[19] Helms commented that the quiet passage of the bill was "a worthy strategy on the part of the sponsors," who feared that if plans for it had been known beforehand, university leaders "would have mobilized their lobbying forces."[20] Indeed, university leaders worked through the night to gather support and came within two votes of rescinding the bill the next day.[21]

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[16] North Carolina Representative Edward Hamlin, remarks to the League of Women Voters' Candidates Meeting, Raleigh, N.C., 13 May 1964.

North Carolina Attorney General Wade Bruton ruled the legislation constitutional, and editors around the state responded with fury. Helms poked fun at the "liberal" press's reaction. "The News and Observer, squirming like a worm on a hot brick, began screaming epithets.... The paper reacted with a vulgar display of ill-temper."[22]

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[17] Hugh Stevens, editor The Daily Tar Heel, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 12 March 1966. Stevens was editor of the student newspaper during the speaker ban controversy. He is now practices law in Raleigh, N.C. and is legal counsel for the North Carolina Press Association.

[18] James Shumaker, former editor of the Chapel Hill Weekly, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 21 March 1996.

[19] Raleigh (N.C.)News and Observer, 26 June 1963.

[20] Sen. Jesse Helms, Washington, D.C., letter to author, 4 April 1996.

[21] Robert Spearman, "The North Carolina Speaker Ban Law." Honors essay, UNC-CH, 1965.

[22] Jesse Helms, Viewpoint, full text from broadcast, WRAL-TV, Raleigh, N.C., 1 July 1963.

The *Raleigh Times* recognized the serious implications of the bill and printed the full text of a 1960 speech Chancellor Aycock made before alumni, in which Aycock said that protection of freedom of expression was the most important issue facing the university. Aycock's words were prophetic:

> On this campus and throughout North Carolina we have certain fundamental freedoms -- including freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of religion.... These freedoms are not absolute.... We recognize and accept the legal limitations such as the laws of libel, slander, and the use of public buildings, but we reject economic, social, and political pressures which would fetter research, publication, teaching, and learning. If we do not reject these pressures, we forfeit our claim to be a university.[23]

The article lead with an editor's note that Aycock's remarks were "pertinent at any time -- but especially now in the wake of the speech gag law."[24] It was among the first of many speeches that Pete Ivy, director of the Carolina News Bureau, would distribute to the media and which the media would print fully.

Public institutions depend on the largess of the government and the taxpayers; they exist to serve the people. University leaders were very much aware that many good people would find it hard to understand why a law banning Communist speakers from the campus ought to be repealed. The ban had to be abolished without incurring lasting resentment and without legislators amending the law. That meant educating people over time about the university's raison d'être: "to provide an environment in which diversity, controversy, and tolerance prevails."[25].

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[23] Ibid, reprinted in Raleigh Times, 4 July 1963.

[24] Raleigh Times, 4 July 1963.

[25] William B. Aycock, "Freedom of the University," speech presented to University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Alumni, Lenoir Hall, Chapel Hill, 6 June, 1960, reprinted in Raleigh Times, 4 July 1963.

University leaders recognized that the first step in combating the ban would be to justify their position to the trustees. Chancellor Aycock, trained as an attorney, presented an analysis of the ban to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees early in July. With the full board scheduled to meet in the fall, Aycock and Friday scheduled regional meetings throughout the remainder of the summer and into early fall with Board members in Asheville, Wilmington, Greenville, Raleigh, and Charlotte.[26] In their comments to trustees, the university administrators stressed the philosophical impact of the law, the law's vagueness, and the practical difficulties in enforcing the law. By the time the full board convened in October, administrators were backed by the Chapel Hill, Raleigh and Greensboro faculties who had adopted resolutions declaring the law potentially "disastrous" and had vowed to look for teaching jobs elsewhere if the General Assembly didn't repeal the act. Faculty members had sent letters to Governor Dan Moore, an ex-officio member of the board, and had actively begun to work with administrators. Playwright and UNC-CH alumnus Paul Green and others spoke on the Chapel Hill campus, adding support to the university. Presidents at least two private colleges, Meredith and Davidson, added their voices to the opposition. The State Board of Higher Education, the North Carolina conference of the American Association of University Professors, and the Presbyterian Synod of North Carolina were aligned with the universities' leaders and all were looking to the Board of Trustees for leadership. [27]

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[26] William B. Aycock, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 19 March 1996.

[27] Alva W. Stewart, "North Carolina's Gag Law," Christian Century, October 10 1964.

When appearing before the full board, university administrators stated that political tampering with the educational process would hamper the university's ability to solicit and maintain faculty and that learned national and international members of learned societies would not tolerate intrusion into their political activities.[28] These were not trivial concerns. The *Herald* reported that five internationally known scientists had canceled scheduled appearances on North Carolina campus, either in protest against the ban or in objection to being asked about their past political activities.[29] The *Greensboro Daily News* and the *Durham Morning Herald* also focused on the law's dangers, and discussed its ambiguities and the impracticality of its enforcement.[30] A *Daily News* editorial reported that an official member of the Soviet delegation to the United States had recently spoken to North Carolina legislators, but under the speaker ban, she could not make the same remarks on a state-supported campus.[31]

The trustees reacted moderately in an obvious effort not to confront speaker ban supporters head-on. They asked that a 15-member trustee committee be appointed to "determine and implement measures to remove this legislative impairment of intellectual freedom and pre-emption of the authority and prerogatives of the board of trustees."[32]

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[28] William B. Aycock, "The Speaker Ban Law," address to the University of North Carolina Board of Trustees, Chapel Hill, N.C., 28 October 1963.

[29] Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 30 October 1963.

[30] Greensboro Daily News, 30 October 1963; Durham Morning Herald, 30 October 1963.

[31] Greensboro Daily News, 30 October 1963.

[32] Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Carolina, 28 October 1963.

In his WRAL-TV editorial broadcast about the trustees' decision, Helms hinted at collusion between the media and university leaders. The meeting was held behind closed doors, Helms said, yet no outcry was heard from press, radio, or television reporters about the people's right to know. Helms further accused the press of "conducting a massive effort to create the impression that the preponderant wisdom and justice of the state are aligned against the ban on Communist speakers." He maintained that just the opposite was true, and that support for the ban was substantial enough to keep it on the books.[33] It would be up to the 1965 legislature to decide, giving opponents of the ban more than a year to garner support.

In the months that followed, university administrators used every opportunity to talk about the speaker ban, and the press reported the speeches in news articles and editorials. University officials recognized that it was essential to enlist the support of large numbers of alumni to work for repeal of the law, and university leaders went on the offensive. Chancellor Aycock used the occasion of the UNC Alumni Board of Directors to label the law "a stigma, an insult, and a limitation upon higher education," and a flurry of news articles followed. It was the Chancellor's most vehement indictment of the law. He told alumni to keep their money and give the university their time in fighting the speaker ban. The *Charlotte Observer* quoted Aycock:

> Only the legislature has the power to get rid of the unfortunate stigma. The only power we have is the power of education ... to show the people and the legislature the tremendous harm in this bill. And it takes time for such an educational power to assert itself.... It was also the poorest drafted legislation that I have ever seen.[34]

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[33] Jesse Helms, Viewpoint, full text from broadcast, WRAL-TV, Raleigh, N.C., 9 July 1963.

[34] Mickey Blackwell, "UNC Chancellor Calls Red Gag Law 'Insult,'" Charlotte Observer, 10 November 1963, p. 1-C.

The *News and Observer* also reported Aycock's speech, adding his rebuttal to the argument being made by ban proponents that most North Carolinians' would support the ban if it were put to a referendum. Aycock said that it was up to legislators to lead, not to follow the whims of the people, and that legislators would never let the people vote on a referendum to abolish the sales tax for education, outlaw the sale of liquor in the state, or decide whether the state should own an airplane. "If they did," Aycock said, "we'd have no sales tax, no liquor sale, and no airplane".[35]

The speech before the Alumni Board of Directors drew criticism from Senator Adam Whitley of Smithfield, a member of the General Assembly since 1949. It was reported that Whitley, in a speech delivered in Smithfield, N.C., threatened that trustees and university officials who condemned the law would be replaced. The *Durham Morning Herald* , *The Raleigh Times*, and the *News and Observer* reported Whitley's threats and his comment that he was "sick of hearing university officials praise the Legislature on one side of their mouth for giving them the money they asked for and out of the other side of their mouth, criticize us." Whitley also stated that the Legislature could run the universities without assistance from Aycock or other officials.[36] Aycock responded by saying that university administrators would be "derelict in their duties" if they did not work against something so "injurious."[37] The story was carried in other papers around the state and became the subject of editorials defending university officials who had "dutifully" carried out legislative policy, and, more importantly, must be free to speak their minds as they saw fit.[38]

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[35] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 11 November 1963.

[37] Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 12 November 1963.

[37] Raleigh Times, 12 November 1963.

Another legislator, Representative L.H. O'Hanlon of Fayetteville, wrote a letter to the *Chapel Hill Weekly* , challenging Aycock to defend the university's stand of freedom of speech. Aycock wrote a response to O'Hanlon that was six columns long, taking a significant portion of the *Weekly*'s editorial news hole. The *Weekly* published the full text under the breezy headline, "O'Hanlon Asks & Aycock Answers."[39]

University administrators knew they couldn't dissuade the general populace from thinking that opposition to the ban mean supporting Communism. Instead, they tried to enlist the help of leaders in the state who would wield influence over legislators.[40] Dozens of speeches and informal talks were made by university leaders to civic clubs, political gatherings, campus organizations, and alumni meetings all over the state.[41] Between November, 1963, and May, 1964, Aycock gave several major speeches, each directed to specific audiences, and each receiving extensive coverage in state newspapers. On November 21, 1963, he talked to the Greensboro Bar Association about "Law and the University," and stated that the law was a "sorry weapon" for fighting Communism, particularly because of its vagueness and its failure to specify any penalty for violations. He argued that the law was unnecessary because there had been a state law, since 1941, that made it unlawful to advocate the use of violence to overthrow the federal or state governments. Again, newspapers around the state reported Aycock's speech, many with the headline phrase "Law a Sorry Weapon."[42]

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[38] See, for example, Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 18 November 1963; Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 13 November 1963.

[39] Chapel Hill Weekly, 2 January 1964.

[40] Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 24 February 1964; William B. Aycock, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 19 March 1996.

[41] See William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 15 March 1996; William B. Aycock, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C.,19 March 1996; Warren Ashby, Frank Porter Graham: A Southern Liberal (Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 1980), 312.

Aycock outlined the general impact of the speaker ban law in a speech to the Watauga Club in Raleigh in January, again emphasizing the difficulty of enforcing the law. "What is meant by 'known' member of the Communist Party?" he asked. "Judgment of a court? Admission? Reputation? Accusation?" He challenged legislators to show evidence that the university had allowed persons with the intent to violently advocate the overthrow of the government to speak on campus, thereby inviting this punishment. In an appeal for his audience's active support for the reversal of the law, Aycock stated:

> We are informed, and I believe correctly so, that the majority of the people favor this legislation. Of course they favor it and will continue to do so unless and until the leaders in the State speak out! ... Silence is interpreted to mean approval or at least qualified approval.[43]

In another speech, Aycock took a different tack and warned members of the Governing Boards of the Institute of Colleges and Universities that the long-lasting effect of the speaker ban law may be "the legislative infringement on the traditional role of governing boards to deal with freedom on the campus." Although governing boards vary in their scope, he said, all have the obligation "to preserve the autonomy and integrity" of the institution they govern. He used UNC as an example and urged those present to profit from Carolina's "unhappy experience."[44]

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[42] See Charlotte Observer, 22 November 1963; Raleigh (N.C.) Times, 21 November 1963; Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 22 November 1963; Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 22 November 1963.

[43] William B. Aycock, "Laws Affecting Speakers," address to the Watauga Club, Raleigh, N.C., 21 January 1964.

Aycock's last major speech before leaving the chancellorship was to parents of Carolina students. In his softly toned speech, he traced Carolina's long history as a "laboratory of living," and explained that the actions of the North Carolina General Assembly were motivated by love in order to protect the state institutions from Communism. But he compared that love to the "misplaced, over-protective mother who smothers her child." He reminded parents that their sons and daughters need to learn to think for themselves if they are to be able to "resist forces that restrict their rights as free citizens"[45] As before, many of North Carolina's newspapers reported the speech, and the *Greensboro Daily News* reported nearly the full text of Aycock's address, which carried the headline, "Speaker Ban Injurious to Students."[46]

When Aycock relinquished responsibility as chancellor to return to his teaching position in the UNC-CH School of Law, a move he had announced thirteen days before the enactment of the speaker ban, many media ran retrospectives of Aycock's administrative record and applauded his fight against the speaker ban. The *Smithfield Herald* said, "Chancellor Aycock's greatest work has been his championship of academic freedom."[47] Other newspapers made the speaker ban controversy the centerpiece of the article and reiterated the dangers of the speaker ban to the university.[48]

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[44] William B. Aycock, "Public Institutions in Relationship to State Government," address at the Conference of Governing Boards of the Institute of Colleges and Universities Administrtion of the Southern Regional Education Board, Atlanta, GA, 24 January 1964.

[45] William B. Aycock, "A Family Reunion," address on Parents' Day, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 3 May 1964.

[46] Greensboro (N.C.) Daily News, 4 May 1964.

[47] Smithfield (N.C.) Herald, 4 June 1964.

The press also chronicled incidents that damaged, or threatened to damage, the university as a result of the speaker ban law, and interviewed university administrators for their comments, thus promoting the university's cause. In an article that bore the headline, "Does The Law Give a Toot?" *Charlotte Observer* reported Aycock's and Friday's opinions that although Communists couldn't speak at a state-supported college or university, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra would be allowed to perform in Memorial Hall.[49] At least one legislator objected, however, saying that the music would lure unsuspecting students into lethargy "and it is at that moment that they pour the poison in."[50] An international exchange visitor from Leningrad State University, approved by the U.S. State Department, addressed a statistics colloquium. Questions raised about his appearance on campus were covered in at least four articles in the state's major newspapers, with Aycock's and Friday's assurances that the statistician would not be in violation of the law.[51]

Many people took seriously a warning from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, which threatened to deny accreditation to the university, or at least put them on probation because of "political interference" in its affairs.[52] Although ban supporters expressed doubts about the danger of accreditation loss, the threat was not empty, and it certainly helped to assist the university's cause.[53] The long-term implications of losing accreditation would not only be damaging to the university's reputation, it would be an embarrassment to the state. Loss of accreditation could mean the loss of federal funds, grants, academic standing in the nation, membership in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Conferences, and the loss of faculty, and students.[54]

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[48] Greensboro Daily News, 4 June 1964; Chapel Hill Weekly, 21 June 1964.

[49] "Does the Law Give a Toot?" Charlotte Observer, 5 November 1963, p. 1-B.

[50] William C. Friday, prod. Crossroads on the Hill, University of North Carolina Public Television, 1993.

[51] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 5 November 1963; Durham (N.C.) Morning Herald, 2 November 1963; The Charlotte Observer, 5 November 1963;

Paul J. Sharp, who replaced Aycock as chancellor, summed up the consequences of the law:

> Faculty morale has suffered, students are restless, administrators are harassed and distracted from essential duties, public controversy mounts, accreditation is threatened, professional organizations refuse to meet on our campus, and we suffer the indignity of unbridled public criticism on the one hand and severe reprimand by our professional colleagues throughout the nation on the other.[55]

The Britt Commission

Despite administrators' hopes that the speaker ban law would be repealed by the 1965 legislature, Governor Dan Moore took the most politic course open to him and recommended that the General Assembly appoint a commission to study the speaker ban. The nine-member commission held four days of televised hearings in August and September,[56] and university leaders

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[52] Luther J. Carter, "Speaker Ban (1): North Carolina Law Stirs Unrest at University," Science, 150 (29 October 1965): 589-91.

[53] Hugh Stevens, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C. 12 March 1996.

[54] Charlotte Observer, 9 September 1965.

[55] Luther J. Carter, "Speaker Ban (1): North Carolina Law Stirs Unrest at University," Science, 150 (29 October 1965): 589-91.

[56] See Gillian D. Floren, "Speaking Freely, UNC-CH Administrators Respond to Freedom of Expression, 1963-1971, UNC-CH master's thesis, 1989; Luther J.Carter, "Speaker Ban(1): North Carolina Law Stirs Unrest at

mounted a massive offensive.[57] On September 8, 1965, UNC President Friday headed an impressive list of college and university spokesmen who appeared before the Britt Commission, chaired by David M. Britt. Friends of the university who addressed the commission included alumnus Vermont Royster, editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, former Governor Luther Hodges (known for

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University," Science, 150 (29 October 1965): 589-91; William C. Aycock, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 19 March, 1996; William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 15 March 1996; William C. Aycock, William C. Aycock, "My Role in the Speaker Ban Controversy," personal papers shared with author, 17 March 1996.

[57] Charlotte Observer, 12 September 1965. C.A. McKnight wrote an editorial listing supporers and opponents of the speaker ban. Under the heading, "Who Wants Law?" were "leaders of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Sen. Robert Morgan of Harnett County (who has hedged of late), Dr. I. Beverly Lake, Sen. Thomas White of Lenoir County, Former Sen. Clarence Stone, Rep. Phil Godwin (who isn't so sure about it now), Dunn newspaperman Hoover Adams, Jesse Helms and WRAL-TV in Raleigh, WBTV in Charlotte, N.C. Alliance for Conservative Republicans (a brand-new group), John Birch Society members, Secretary of State Thad Eure (who composed the bill, and a few assorted others."

Under the heading, "Who Opposes Law?" McKnight wrote, "Here's a partial list of those who staunchly opppose the law. University President William C. Friday, Watts Hill, Jr., chairman of the State Board of Higher Education, Dallas Herring, chairman of the State Board Education, Chancellor Paul Sharp of UNC-CH, Former Chancellor William B. Aycock of UNC-CH, Chancellor John Caldwell of N.C. State University, Chancellor (on leave) Otis Singletary of UNC-G, Acting ChancellorJames S. Ferguson of UNC-G, Acting Chancellor Bonnie Cone of UNC-C, presidents of the 11 state-supported senior colleges, 96 of 100 UNC trustees, Practically all North Carolina newspapers, Former Gov. Terry Sanford, Former Gov. Luther Hodges, Southern Associateion of Colleges and Schools, American Association of University Professors, Davidson College Chapter of AAUP, Wake Forest College Chapter of AAUP, Duke University Chapter, AAUP, President Douglas Knight of Duke University, East Carolina College Faculty Council, East Carolina Student Government Association, Student Governments at four UNC campuses, Vermont Royster, UNC Alumni president and editor of The Wall Street Journal, State Board of Higher Education (two different resolutions), Presbyterian Synod of N.C. spokesmen, Faculty Council of UNC, Campbell College Faculty, Former UNC President Frank Graham, N.C. Teen-Dem Clubs, College Young Democrats, N.C. Young Democrats, Malcolm B. Seawell, Maj. L.P. McLendon,Irving Carlyle, Dramatist Paul Green, Legette Blythe and many other N.C. writers, A great many of N.C. legislators (a majority, we believe). The list could go on to include such outstanding UNC alumni as Kemp Battle, James B. McMillan, D. Ed Hudgins, Samuel I. Parker and Dr. J. Dewey Dorsett, Jr., whose statements were presented to the commission.

his economic development work), former Attorney General Malcolm B. Seawell, and Watts Hill, Jr.

In the five days following the hearings, the *Charlotte Observer* published two editorials about university leaders' testimony and made clear their support of the university. First, in an editorial headed, "University Officials Bring Light to Bear on Gag Law," and which began, "Great shafts of light and truth broke through the overcast skys," editor C.A. McKnight affirmed the damage that had been done by the speaker ban and called for nothing less than outright repeal.[58] The *Observer* published twelve stories detailing testimony on both sides of the controversy, and on Saturday, September 11, it devoted a double page spread to remarks made by university officials that included most of the prepared text presented to the commission. A boxed editor's note read:

> The Consolidated University of North Carolina has been under direct and indirect attack by supporters of the speaker ban law for more than two years. Finally, at the official Britt Commission hearings this week, University spokesmen officially answered their critics.[59]

The state's other major newspaper, the *News and Observer,* published thirteen stories about the ban in the five days following the hearings. Among the headlines that hinted at the Raleigh paper's anti-speaker ban position, were: "UNC Hits at Root of Ban Controversy,"[60] "Hodges Says Growth Threatened,"[61] and "Ex-Agent: Law Goes About It Wrong Way," which refers to ex-FBI agent Ralph Clontz, Jr., who testified that "a speaker from a Communist country on a cultural or scientific subject is entirely different from advocacy of overthrow of the government."[62] Editorials in the News and Observer asked commissioners to "listen long and act in wisdom" so that the universities could begin to repair the damage.[63]

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[58] Charlotte Observer, 10 September 1965.

[59] Charlotte Observer, 11 September 1965.

[60] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 9 September 1965.

[61] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 10 September 1965.

Helms, whose WRAL-TV station's license had been in question because of alleged violations of the "Fairness Doctrine," found his own words used against him when Aycock addressed the commission. In quoting from Helm's August 4, 1965 broadcast, Aycock said:

> Broadcasters throughout the nation have long complained that the Fairness Doctrine is vague beyond comprehension, that it imposes obligations and responsibilities, and even that the FCC exceeded its authority in the adoption of a document which, as some of our newspaper friends now note, "come close to an attempt at censorship.'

Aycock asked commissioners to substitute "educators" for "broadcasters," "Speaker Ban Law" for "Fairness Doctrine," and "General Assembly" for "FCC" and the result would be an articulate statement of the university's viewpoint on the Speaker Ban Law.[64] Aycock's statements were widely reported in the media.[65]

On the recommendation of the Britt Commission, the law was amended, and it relieved some pressure for abolition of the law. The ban stayed in effect, but gave trustees at the universities the power to set their own regulations on speakers, prompting MacNeill Smith, the Greensboro attorney who would later file the lawsuit that ended the speaker ban, to observe, "It's no less censorship to say Bill Friday can regulate speakers than the police or the sheriff can."[66] But the issue lost momentum after the amendment passed; all who were involved were weary. It would be the students who picked up the banner of freedom of expression.[67]

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[62] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 10 September 1965.

[63] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 9 September 1965; 11 September 1965.

[64] William B. Aycock, "Statement in Opposition to the Speaker Ban Law," address to the Speaker Ban Study Commission, 8 September 1965, Raleigh, N.C.

[65] Greensboro (N.C.)Daily News, 19 September 1965; Charlotte Observer, 11 September 1965; Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 9 September 1965.

Testing the Ban

Students contended that even the amended law abridged their right to free speech, and they formally challenged the law. In January, 1966, members of the Students for a Democratic Society issued invitations to Frank Wilkinson and Herbert Apthecker to speak on the Chapel Hill campus in March. Wilkinson had in 1952 pleaded the Fifth Amendment before a legislative committee of the State of California, which was investigating Communist or subversive activities. Apthecker was director of the Institute of Marxist Studies in New York. Student leaders, who had been considering the possibility of a court action against the ban, had been advised by attorney MacNeill Smith that testing the ban would build a stronger case.[68]

Although campus administrators initially gave their approval for the invitations, the Board of Trustees, lead by Gov. Moore, denied the student's request. When the trustees transferred responsibility for enforcing the ban to the chancellors at each university, newly appointed Chancellor Sitterson followed the trustee's lead and denied permission for the two men to speak. More than a thousand students met on February 7 to form the Committee for Free Inquiry, and elected Paul Dickson, III, as president. With endorsements from the Student Government and increased student commitment, campus leaders resolved to bring Wilkinson and Apthecker to Carolina regardless.

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[66] MacNeill Smith, interview with Gillian Floren, Chapel Hill, N.C., 12 July 1988, reported in Gillian D. Floren, "Speaking Freely, UNC-CH Administrators Respond to Freedom of expression, 1963-1971," UNC-CH master's thesis, 1989.

[67] William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 15 March 1996.

[68] Hugh Stevens, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C. 12 March 1996.

Frank Wilkinson was refused permission to speak on Chapel Hill campus on March 3, 1966. When a UNC security guard denied Wilkinson and students entry to Carroll Hall, Wilkinson moved to the sidewalk that separates the campus from public property and talked to about 1,500 students over a low, stone wall. The Raleigh *News and Observer*, the *Chapel Hill Weekly* and the *Charlotte Observer* published the story on their front pages, with four-column photographs of Wilkinson and the students, who were holding a sign that said, "Gov. Dan K. Moore's (Chapel Hill) Wall."[69] Paul Dickson, student body president, announced that students would file a court suit to overrule university administrator's decision to bar Wilkinson, and said, "When they refuse a man the right to speak, they're denying his rights under the First Amendment. The law is clearly unconstitutional."[70]

A week later Apthecker, too, was stopped from speaking on campus and addressed nearly 2,000 students across the stone wall. This time, an NBC camera crew from the Huntley-Brinkley news show joined North Carolina journalists in recording what has been called one of the most embarrassing events in the university's history.[71] Apthecker, whose opening comments were heckled by the audience, apologized for the spectacle his appearance had prompted, and said that he thought he had the right to speak under the First Amendment.[72] When he finished his speech, the *Charlotte Observer* reported, the students applauded for about a minute.[73] A side bar to the Apthecker story began, "Should the State of North Carolina accept $100,000 worth of free publicity, courtesy of a bonafide Communist? ... (The question) is moot. We're gonna get the puff." The article depicted Apthecker as non threatening and scolded speaker ban proponents for bringing this humiliation to the university and to the state:

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[69] Charlotte Observer, 3 March 1966.

[70] Ibid.

[71] See William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 15 March 1996.

> One of these nights ... before the "Good night, Chet" and "Good night, David," the Tar Heel serial entitled "Speaker Ban" will have been beamed all across the United States.
>
> Whether this free plug will cause a Michigander to leap from his easy chair and add to the tourist take at Wrightsville Beach is another matter.
>
> Apthecker was "Exhibit A" for the diehard defenders of the speaker ban, and shortly before noon there he was in the flesh, being ferried down Franklin Street by some students.
>
> He's about 5-7, weights about 140, wears a graying crewcut and horn-rim spectacles, owns a soft voice, and was an uninspiring speaker.[74]

The Judges' Ruling

On April 1, attorney MacNeill Smith filed a lawsuit in Greensboro federal court on behalf of twelve student leaders, Apthecker and Wilkinson. Named as defendants were J. Carlyle Sitterson, acting chancellor of UNC-CH, William C. Friday, president of UNC, the board of trustees of the university, and the state of North Carolina. Smith would use many of the same arguments made by administrators in their speeches, letters, and conversations in persuading the court to overrule the Speaker Ban Law.[75]

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[72] Charlotte Observer, 10 March, 1966.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

The three-judge panel ruled that the law was unconstitutional, saying that it failed to establish "clear, narrow, and objective standards" for determining who could not speak on state supported college and university campuses. "No one has an absolute right to speak on a college or university campus," the judge's decision said, "but once such institution opens its doors to visiting speakers it must do so under principles that are constitutionally valid." [76]

Editorial comment about the ruling was solemn. The *Charlotte Observer* published a commentary that said, "So be it....The speaker ban law is now a dead letter in North Carolina." [77] A *News and Observer* editorial called the ruling "anticlimactic," and the course to the ruling "a public roller coaster ride of emotional confusion and disagreement." In an tone that may have reflected the mood across the state, the editorial admonished that the significance of the issue would be lost if one only listened to the cheers or grumbles. Cautions were offered to both those who needed to remember the harm that could come from restricting academic freedom and to those who needed to remember that freedom is never protected from the "consequences of public concern or misunderstanding." The editorial urged "responsible restraint" from all parties.[78]

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[75] Dickson v. Sitterson, 280 F. Supp. 486 (1968).

[76] Ibid.

[77] Charlotte Observer, 21 February 1968.

[78] Raleigh (N.C.) News and Observer, 21 February 1968.

WRAL-TV's editorial comment was still full of fight. Helms concluded that the ruling was a win for legislative conservatives and had proved left-wingers to be "lousy strategists." He said:

> The federal judges have upheld, even commended, the spirit of the law, and have given fairly precise instructions as to how it should be rewritten in order to withstand constitutional tests in the future. Almost any schoolboy could take the old law, insert a few words of definition, and hand it to a state senator for introduction in the next session of the legislature.[79]

Legislators did not rewrite the law, and the issue quietly died.

Conclusion

First Amendment issues are sometimes difficult to understand. For many people in North Carolina, it wasn't logical for university administrators to want protect the right of Communists to speak at the state's colleges and universities. Too, the concept of academic freedom for the state's universities had slipped away in the emotional turbulence of the 1960s. It fell to university leaders and their supporters to do what they do best -- educate -- to reverse the speaker ban law. Administrators and friends exerted great energy in the effort to gather supporters who understood the damage the law could do to the university's intellectual freedom and academic reputation. The media seemed to be a willing friend in getting disseminating the message. Certainly, protecting freedom of expression from restrictive legislation was in the media's own best interest, but the consistent support of nearly all of North Carolina's editors suggests that most simply recognized that it was a bad law. With few exceptions, the media reported every speech, every new development in a way that allowed university leaders to explain their points persuasively.

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[79] Jesse Helms, Viewpoint, full text from broadcast, WRAL-TV, Raleigh, N.C., 22 February 1968.

Former UNC President Friday, in an interview some thirty years after the speaker ban controversy, has likened the reaction to the bill to a tent meeting in which those present thrashed out the meaning of freedom of expression. He said, "Once we got over the shock of the thing, I think all of us realized what a wonderful opportunity it was to explain to our people one more time why the university was here."[80] Indeed, the explaining took on the tone of a crusade. University administrators had the attention of the state and made the most of it to tell their side of the story.

Following the speaker ban amendment, there was little university leaders could do. Decisions about who could speak on campuses were theirs to make, but they were compelled to uphold the law forbidding Communists and persons having plead the Fifth Amendment from speaking on campus. The university leaders had given the legislators the chance to repeal the law and they didn't; legal action was the only recourse. As a university administrator, Friday could not file a lawsuit himself. Students, who had the least to lose, academically or professionally, had to take the fight to the next step. Ironically, as student involvement in the fight escalated, they turned to Friday for guidance, and he quietly advised them, putting his own career in jeopardy by doing so.[81] The aftermath of the speaker ban controversy, UNC-CH alumnus Hugh Stevens commented, was that the students felt a greater connection to the university and what it symbolized. Legislators who never intended to do so became the catalyst for students, faculty, and administrators to draw closer together and to discuss just the kinds of philosophical issues that would breathe life into the words of the Constitution.

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[80] William C. Friday, interview with author, tape recording, Chapel Hill, N.C., 15 March 1996.

[81] Ibid.

Abstract

The Vietnam War, The Cold War, and Protestants: How the Christian Century and Christianity Today Reflected American Society in the 1960s

By David E. Settje, Kent State University

Although no two problems affected American society during the 1960s more than the Cold and Vietnam Wars, few historians have studied the two phenomena simultaneously. The Cold War between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America dominated world diplomacy and forced Americans to live under the constant tension of a possible nuclear war. In addition, this standoff led American leaders to instigate a war in the Southeast Asian nation of Vietnam to stop Ho Chi Minh's Communist guerrilla armies. This combat resulted from the United States's continued reliance on the domino theory, which held that losing one country to communism would doom neighboring nations to a similar fate, and ultimately result in the fall of the entire world. Thus, the Vietnam War, fostered by Cold War hostilities, led to a general fear in American society that communism threatened democracy. While many Americans agreed with the Vietnam War's importance for fighting the Cold War, other Americans saw the war as an imperialistic attack on innocent peoples because American involvement infringed upon the Vietnamese right to self-determination. In short, average Americans agreed that the U.S. must fight the Cold War against Russia and China, but began to disagree on the validity of the domino theory, especially as it pertained to the Vietnam War.

Despite the important interplay between Cold War mentalities and Vietnam War convictions expressed by common Americans, few scholars have simultaneously examined these two concepts. Nor have historians of American society during the 1960s concurrently delved into both sides of the Vietnam debate. To really understand the nature of American society during the 1960s, scholars must come to grips with how Americans, aside from the radical fringes on the right and left, dealt with the combination of Cold War anxieties and either support or disdain for the Vietnam War.

The Protestant community's debate over the Cold and Vietnam Wars, manifested in religious periodicals, provides a fertile arena for examining the popular reaction to both conflicts between August 1964 and the fall of Saigon in 1975. According to 1960s opinion polls, Protestant ideals mirrored those of American society. Furthermore, the religious community provides solid sources because of their dedication to publishing journals that include articles, editorials, and letters to the editor. An examination of two prominent Christian periodicals, the liberal Christian Century and the Evangelical Christianity Today, can provide a starting place for exploring the religious reaction to both the Cold and Vietnam Wars, including the protest and prowar movements. In short, these journals illuminate how churches continued to foster Cold War fears by persistently denouncing the Soviet Union and China but, in contrast, they also demonstrate how Protestants paralleled this Cold War antagonism with disagreements about U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In addition, such an examination reveals the way in which the religious print media generated these Cold War anxieties and aided in the debate over the Vietnam War. In short, these publications reflect how Americans continued to worry about Cold War fears and debated the Vietnam War. Finally, the periodicals disclose the role of journals in propagandizing various positions and exposing how average Americans viewed this era.

The Vietnam War, The Cold War, and Protestants: How the Christian Century and Christianity Today Reflected American Society in the 1960s

Although no two problems affected American society during the 1960s more than the Cold and Vietnam Wars, few historians have studied the two phenomena simultaneously. The Cold War between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America dominated world diplomacy and forced Americans to live under the constant tension of a possible nuclear war. In addition, this standoff led American leaders to instigate a war in the Southeast Asian nation of Vietnam to stop Ho Chi Minh's Communist guerrilla armies. This combat resulted from the United States's continued reliance during the 1960s on the domino theory, which held that losing one country to communism would doom neighboring nations to a similar fate, and ultimately result in the fall of the entire world. Thus, the Vietnam War antagonized Cold War fears in American society. At the same time, it also generated opposition from those who saw the war as an imperialistic attack on innocent peoples because American involvement infringed upon their right to self-determination. Despite the important interplay between Cold War mentalities and Vietnam War convictions, few scholars have simultaneously examined these two concepts. Nor have historians of American society during the 1960s concurrently delved into both sides of the Vietnam debate. A myriad of studies analyze the peace movement, but few contrast this phenomenon with prowar sentiment. To really understand the nature of American society during the 1960s, scholars must come to grips with how Americans, aside from the radical fringes on the right and left, dealt with the combination of Cold War anxieties and either support or disdain for the Vietnam War.[1]

The Protestant community's debate over the Cold and Vietnam Wars provides a fertile arena for examining the popular reaction to both conflicts between August 1964 and the fall of Saigon in 1975. Indeed, 1960s Gallup opinion polls reveal that the Protestant community's response to the Cold and Vietnam Wars almost mirrored exactly that of the nation at large. When asked to indicate which nations they viewed as "favorable," respondents rated Russia and China poorly, with only .5 to 2 percent seeing these countries favorably. When pollsters broke the subject down by religious affiliation, Protestants had the same results as the national average. The same was true for questions about the Vietnam War. In 1965, 48 percent of those polled agreed with the United States's handling of the Vietnam War, 28 percent disagreed, and 24 percent had no opinion. Protestants closely paralleled this with 46 percent agreeing, 28 percent disagreeing, and 26 percent with no opinion. This similarity continued throughout the duration of American involvement in Vietnam. By 1971, most Americans approved of Richard M. Nixon's attempted Vietnamization, and once again the Protestant church almost precisely paralleled the national results. Thus, the Protestant community provides a solid vantage point from which to begin understanding average Americans during the Vietnam War era.[2]

The Protestant response to the war in Vietnam proves especially intriguing due to the historic Christian opposition to Communist atheism and its attempts to purge the world of all religion. Although this study will focus only on Protestant denominations, scholars should remember that Catholics, Jews, and members of other religions also debated these issues. An examination of two prominent Christian periodicals, the liberal Christian Century and the Evangelical Christianity Today, can provide a starting place for exploring the religious reaction to both the Cold and Vietnam Wars, including the protest and prowar movements. These publications reflect how Americans continued to worry about Cold War fears. They also demonstrate how Protestants, and Americans in general, debated U.S. involvement in Vietnam.[3]

The widespread popularity and non-denominational status of the Christian Century and Christianity Today make them good vehicles for examining American society's grappling with Cold War anxieties and division over the Southeast Asian War. The Christian Century represents the liberal theological and political viewpoint, while Christianity Today epitomizes conservative thought. Christianity Today had a circulation of 253,579, while the Christian Century's was only 45,000. Part of this difference can be explained by the fact that the Christian Century had to compete with journals, such as Christianity and Crisis (circulation 18,500), that expressed similar opinions, while Christianity Today represented one of the few non-denominational periodicals with an Evangelical slant. The conservative journal also benefited from its association with the popular Evangelist Billy Graham, who encouraged people through his ministry to read the periodical he had helped found. And even with a circulation of 45,000, the Christian Century fared better than the majority of religious publications, which averaged circulations of well under 25,000. Naturally, neither religious journal compares well with popular periodicals. For example, Sports Illustrated boasted a subscription list of well over 1 million, and Playboy regularly reached nearly 4.5 million subscribers. Nonetheless, both Protestant journals symbolize important segments of the population and took political positions shared by most of their readers.[4]

Christianity Today and the Christian Century reflect how American society grappled with its Cold War anxieties and simultaneously debated the

Vietnam War. To begin, these journals paralleled one another on Cold War issues. Regarding China, both periodicals cautioned against total trust of the Communists, although the Evangelical editors did take a harsher stance. In addition, both publications fully agreed on vilifying the Soviet Union. However, this harmony disappeared when each periodical discussed the Vietnam conflict. The Christian Century supported most types of resistance to the war, but Christianity Today endorsed the policies of the various presidential administrations. These journals thereby allow historians to compare the antiwar populace with those who supported the war. Thus, both Protestant journals demonstrate how average Americans agreed on disliking the Communist governments in China and the Soviet Union while concurrently debating whether or not the United States needed to continue fighting in Southeast Asia.

Regarding China, both periodicals distrusted the Chinese Communist government, but Christianity Today totally disdained its policies while the Christian Century wanted to allow for the possibility of a U.S.-Sino relationship. In each periodical during the late 1960s, China especially came into play because the global community debated allowing Communist China into the United Nations in place of the Chinese Nationalists from Taiwan, who, with U.S. backing, had held China's UN seat since their exile from mainland China after World War II. In fact, the United States did not even recognize Mao Tse-tung's Communist government in China. At first, the Christian Century seemed to favor U.S. recognition of Red China and its admission into the United Nations. But this positive stance stemmed from the hope that such a move would push the next generation of Communist rulers to peacefully cooperate with capitalistic nations. In short, the editors wanted to keep Christian passions against dealing with Communist states from derailing sound international policies that might ease Cold War tensions. To this end, they also believed that the Chinese government might aid in bringing about a solution to the Vietnam conflict, a war that the liberal Christian Century despised. Also, the Christian Century may have recognized that China had embroiled itself in a controversy with the Soviet Union over the nations' shared border and their leadership of world communism. Thus, some of the Christian Century's support for Communist China derived from editorial glee over the first sign of a crack in the world Communist fortress.[5]

This openness to the possibility of U.S. recognition of Communist China did not hold true in all aspects of the Christian Century's thinking. The editors worried that Maoism had become China's mode of gaining social cohesion and personal commitment, feelings normally given to society by world religions. Especially distressing to the journal was the fact that young people in China seldom went to church because they grew up believing in the Communist ideology of Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Furthermore, the journal's readership took exception to recognizing Communist China. One subscriber pointed out that after living in China for two years, he was forced to flee because to survive as a Christian hinged on his ability to "lie and conceal [his] true feelings." Therefore, the Christian Century fretted that Communist China had abandoned all forms of religion.[6]

Mirroring the caution put forth by the Christian Century's fear of an irreligious China, Christianity Today attacked the Chinese government's Communist policies and atheism. The editors blasted the lack of Christianity in China and claimed that the government had implemented plans to vanquish it. While largely true, this stance failed to account for the more predominant Eastern religions, especially Buddhism and Confucianism, which dominated

Chinese religious life. Gloomily, the editors concluded that "the only hope for Christianity lies in developing 'underground home congregations.'" In addition, although apprehensive about President Richard M. Nixon's daring trip to China, the publication adhered to its policy of supporting the chief executive and hoped that Nixon and Mao would discuss the freedom of religion in China. Following Nixon's meeting with Mao, however, the conservative periodical denounced his trip because of reports that the two had not discussed religion, and because observers in China claimed that few Christians could be seen anywhere.[7]

Moreover, because the editors of Christianity Today maintained that China's people actually worshiped Mao as "the only god that millions of [them] have ever known," they took a paternalistic attitude toward Chinese citizens for blindly following their leadership. As they saw it, "righteous indignation against Chairman Mao's God-hating ideology is right, but hatred or even indifference for the people who have been enslaved by this ideology is sinful and inexcusable." Later, the journal expressed concern about the next generation of Chinese revolutionaries who were continuing the sacrilegious practice of adoring the "Marxist messiah." The theologians went so far as to call them all "mini-Maos" and speculated on the best means to reach a population so misguided and in such desperate need of the Evangelical message, although they never advocated starting a revolution against the Communist Chinese government and thus never stated how exactly to achieve this communication. They even compared the youthful Red Guard to Nazis who haunted the landscape in search of openly Christian people to harass. A more racist policy manifested itself in articles that tried to understand the "Chinese mind" and wondered how it had developed a belief in the superiority of China, which constantly "cut itself away from Christianity." In this line of thinking, Mao was seen as manipulating the peasants for his revolution by making them feel important despite their low status. Thus, much like the Christian Century's cautions against Communist China's lack of religion, Christianity Today deplored the fact that the feeble Chinese mind had allowed godless communism to overtake its land and asserted that the Chinese people needed to be brought back to the Christian message.[8]

Unlike the liberal Christian Century, Christianity Today disdained the attempt to recognize Red China. The liberal National Council of Churches had endorsed the move, forcing the editors of the Evangelical magazine to wonder how a Christian body could take such a stand "despite Communist China's past and present record of ruthless violence, rampaging atheism, iron-fisted tyranny, and aggressive imperialism." This history led the editors to ponder aloud where the supposed Open Door to China would actually lead America: "You can bet your fortune cookies that in the days ahead," talk of sending missionaries to a reopened China "will be proliferated by malinformed Christians who, though they mean well, are so immersed in the concept of 'send the foreign missionary to China' that they show shocking insensitivity to the China scene as it is."[9]

Both Christianity Today and the Christian Century distrusted the Communist Chinese. In part, Chinese actions justified their anxieties. According to eyewitness accounts from reliable missionaries, the church had gone underground, and the Communists did seek to eradicate religious belief in favor of following the dictates of the state. But characterizations of the Chinese as blindly following this system were racist, and both periodicals failed to understand that Christianity had never strongly influenced the

Chinese mainland, where more traditional Eastern religions held powerful sway. Indeed, much of the Chinese government's mistrust of Christianity stemmed from the church's historically blatant disregard for all other faiths. Thus, the publications fueled fears of an atheistic Communist takeover of the world by castigating China and not allowing for the possibility for mutual existence.

The same Cold War attitude prevailed in each periodical with regard to the Soviet Union, but in this case the editors of the Christian Century lost all traces of understanding and stood side by side with their more conservative counterparts in rebuking Soviet communism as an evil villain to fight. Thus, regarding the most important Cold War issue for Americans during the 1960s, both Protestant periodicals were united. In fact, unlike their mutual dislike for the Chinese that still contained a slight divergence on the issue of recognition, the Christian Century and Christianity Today both deplored the Soviet Union because they thought it tried to vanquish freedom and all forms of religion around the world.

Christianity Today made the boldest statement against Soviet communism by insinuating that U.S. capitalism represented God's side of the Cold War because it defended Christianity by allowing global mission work and because American capitalists adhered to the Christian faith. An interview with Dr. B. P. Dotsenko, a nuclear scientist who had defected to the West, proved fears of a godless Russia by supporting prevailing fears that the Soviet state had to come first in a person's life and that it totally controlled every citizen. Especially frightening was the scientist's revelation that the Soviets made him choose between submitting to their godless government or being exiled from Russia if he maintained his loyalty to Christ. An interview with the Russian Council on Religious Affairs further underscored the dualistic combat when the vice-chairman stated that all the council members were avowed atheists because "it is impossible to be a communist and a believer." Furthermore, when the U.S. Senate voted to condemn Soviet persecution of Jewish people, the periodical declared that the U.S. government had put itself "publicly on the Lord's side." In fact, Christianity Today never found a positive side to the Soviet Union. Even the editors' report on Nikita Khrushchev's death described him as "a man who lived and died a Communist, a faithful adherent to a miserable system."[10]

As it had with China, Christianity Today worried about the Soviet oppression of churches. The arrest and trial of Georgi Vins, a member of a dissident Baptist movement in the Soviet Union, illustrates the fear Soviet communism generated for the periodical. The rebellious Baptist movement appeared after the main Soviet Baptist church gave in to governmental demands to publish certain guidelines for all citizens that contradicted church policy. Vins was apprehended while protesting this move in 1966, an action that convinced Christianity Today's editors that Christianity was doomed to collapse within the Soviet Union's borders. The Christian Century also expressed concern because so many Soviet citizens could not express their true beliefs. Both journals felt that Vins's arrest indicated a Soviet resistance to people voicing individual opinions. The Vins case charged anti-Communist sentiments and presented vindication for the Protestant community's all out alarm regarding communism. Even before the Vins case, Christianity Today had criticized the impending visit of Leonid Brezhnev to the United States because "no substantial effort had been made to express concern over repression of Christians in the Soviet Union." Thus, the prospects for peace meant little if Christianity did not become the focus of discussions.[11]

This Christian hostility toward the Soviet Union depicts one way that Protestants reflected and propagated Soviet fears, but proof that the Communists tried to eradicate Christianity incited near panic in the offices of both the liberal and Evangelical periodicals. A report on world affairs in the Christian Century indicated that all publications in the Soviet Union went through censorship, with the result that the U.S.S.R. published less religious material per person than any other nation. But in editorials written during his visit to the Soviet Union, J. Robert Nelson reported that a large number of people went to church and that the government only impinged on his freedom once. The periodical never explained why his trip contradicted their other accounts. In fact, articles on Soviet oppression in both periodicals never state the frequency with which the Soviet Union used extreme measures to block Christians from following their faith.[12]

Christianity Today also reported on the persecution faced by Christians in the Soviet Union, but in more provocative terms. Letters and reports explained the difficulty of baptizing anyone over the age of eighteen months or lamented the prohibition of passing offering plates during a service. Furthermore, the editors related accounts of believers whose apartments had been searched and applauded an attempt by one group of Soviet Protestants to ask the United Nations for intervention. They even suggested that a document from dissident Protestants proved that "'tens of thousands of believers' died in prisons or in exile between 1929 and 1961." Many probably did die under Josef Stalin's terror, but that did not accurately reflect the facts as they stood in the 1960s. Unfortunately, exact statistics regarding the number of Christian persecutions by the Soviet Union during the 1960s remain unavailable. Articles especially asserted that the government aimed its elimination of Christianity at the younger generation who had not previously been exposed to religious beliefs. Thus, church leaders had to perform all education in secret while the government worked in schools to promote atheism. The periodical felt that traditional Evangelicalism was threatened because "the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is precisely that religious activity the Soviet state is pledged to eradicate."[13]

Despite the negative summaries of persecutions, both publications mirrored one another in finding hope because many Russian Christians fought to preserve their religion. The Christian Century called Communist philosophies that education could dismiss religion mere "illusions." Another editor's visit to the Soviet Union brought further promise to the United States because many young people had started to reorganize the church. Similarly, Christianity Today proudly announced that spiritual activity had grown so fast in the Soviet Union that state newspapers warned soldiers and officials of the dangers inherent in these new movements. The Christian Century even applauded the popularity of *Jesus Christ Superstar* among Soviet youth. Interestingly, these realizations that the church continued to persist in the Soviet Union never stopped the extreme fear issued forth by both periodicals regarding Soviet policy. They merely summarized the courage of many Christians who fought to continue following Christian doctrines and proclaimed that the flame of faith could never die, despite earlier warnings of the dire situation Christianity faced in this Communist nation.[14]

These accounts of Soviet hostility led to simple, unabashed anticommunism. The Christian Century warned against pastors believing pamphlets sent out by the Communist Party, U.S.A., which stated that the party and Christianity had the same goals: "Christians and Jews faithful to their

God's will for man and wise to the ways of the world did not fall for such sweetly poisonous deceptions in the past. Nor, we are confidant, will they do so now." The editors also chided a Presbyterian pastor in Kentucky for serving as an elector of the Communist party. More interestingly, Christianity Today printed articles by the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover, admonishing Americans to understand that the Communist party was a "false religion" and "devious network" that threatened the government of the United States. Drumming up more hysteria, the editors outlined the life of one student at the University of California who went from wanting to join the ministry to becoming a devoted Communist and atheist who advocated killing to bring about change. In short, plots to convert U.S. youth to communism proved that "Western democracies are under siege."[15]

As in China, many of the periodicals' fears proved justified because the Soviet Union did attack the Russian Christian church. But while the editors rightfully worried about the treatment of fellow humans in other nations, both journals exaggerated this to mean that Christianity throughout the world faced extinction if the United States and other Christian nations did not implement steps to stop the Soviet Union and China from expanding their power base and thereby eradicating the world of religion. Christianity Today underscored this need by quoting Karl Marx, who had called religion the opiate of the masses. These inflammatory accounts never explained this contradiction with other stories in the same journals that outlined the persistence of religious belief in China and the Soviet Union. More importantly, such impassioned warnings fueled the fear of communism most Americans already had developed during the Cold War. Consequently, these religious journals blindly supported Cold War hysteria by constantly asserting that communism represented nothing but pure, unadulterated evil.

The negative reactions of Christianity Today and the Christian Century to China and the Soviet Union, the two largest, most powerful world Communist nations during the 1960s, illustrates how society continued to dread the presence of Communist governments. These journals especially demonstrated how Protestants fueled the belief that the atheism inherent in communism could potentially take over the world and reflected the inherent anxiety many Americans had of Communist superpowers. Thus, the Protestant community added to the Cold War apprehensions that led American society to want to stop any form of global communism.

This Cold War harmony between the liberal Protestant Christian Century and the conservative Evangelical Christianity Today disappeared, however, when the periodicals debated the presence of U.S. forces in Southeast Asia, who fought on behalf of the South Vietnamese government against the Communist guerrillas of Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam. The periodicals took opposite views of the Vietnam War: The Christian Century blasted American involvement in Southeast Asia while Christianity Today defended American actions as necessary. Thus, Christianity Today maintained its Cold War posture of not accepting any form of communism, anywhere in the world. But the Christian Century tempered its Cold War rhetoric with the view that the Vietnam War was an imperialistic infringement upon the right to self-determination, which the journal stated was the reason the Vietnamese were fighting a civil war. But both periodicals felt that their position on the Vietnam War did not contradict their Cold War policies. The debates between the periodicals will demonstrate how they coupled their differing positions on American involvement in Southeast Asia with the above agreement on Cold War antagonism. The journals' following debates outline this point: Christianity Today advocated the war because it represented Soviet and Chinese expansionism while the Christian Century wanted to negotiate peace because the Vietnam War was only a civil war unrelated to the larger Cold War; to this end, they also argued about either defending Lyndon B. Johnson's and Richard M. Nixon's records as president or castigating the chief executives for imperialistic policies in Vietnam.

Following the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in August 1964 and continuing until Ho Chi Minh's forces conquered Saigon in 1975, Christianity Today coupled its Cold War fears with a defense of the government's policy in Vietnam. Although its editors avoided an outright defense of combat, the Evangelical periodical nonetheless mirrored its antagonism for Communist superpowers by supporting the war and stating that U.S. troops needed to aid in the preservation of Christianity. To this end, Christianity Today's editors implored readers to support their government, which fought the evil Communist empire, by not impeding foreign policy initiatives with protest movements. Many scholars maintain that the national mood had turned against the war by 1968, but Christianity Today still proclaimed that the South Vietnamese needed protection because North Vietnamese Communists were "slowly eradicating Roman Catholicism and Buddhism," "forbid old people to go to church," and sent children out to beat drums to interrupt religious ceremonies. This posture reveals the editors' consistent defense of U.S. military intervention in Vietnam as a way of preserving religion there. More pointedly, the journal defended the presidents against attacks that demanded they immediately negotiate a peaceful settlement to the war. For example, referring to the fact that the dispute over where to place the boundary between North and South Vietnam had been used as a justification for continued warfare, the editors wished that "the doves would stipulate precisely where . . . they would draw a line against Communist aggression." Thus, they claimed that the Cold War difficulty of dealing with any Communists necessitated the continuance of the Vietnam War during the 1960s."[16]

In sharp contrast, the editors of the Christian Century asserted that the United States should immediately cease all activity in Southeast Asia and claimed that the government had never given citizens a valid justification for America's involvement. Thus, although the Christian Century disdained Communist Russia and Red China, the editors did not link these evil nations with the North Vietnamese, unlike their counterparts at Christianity Today, who did lump all Communists together as one force. In short, the Christian Century questioned the existence of one, worldwide Communist monolith and instead recognized variances within this broad political ideology. Therefore, the editors' arguments against American involvement in Vietnam often outlined why North Vietnam never posed the same Communist risk as China and the Soviet Union. The editors viewed the Vietnam conflict as a civil war over the right to a nationalistic desire for self-determination, not an arena where the United States had to make the last world stand against the evil Communist empire, which they realized had nothing to do with fighting in Southeast Asia.

Already in August 1964, the Christian Century's writers wondered "why American naval vessels had to be sent into the waters between Hainan and North Vietnam," arguing that the United States might react just as angrily as the North Vietnamese if "an armed Vietnamese ship mov[ed], for example, into the international waters between Catalina Island and California." They asserted that President Lyndon B. Johnson merely wanted to force Americans to accept the war without questioning his policies and so stated that, "we are being conditioned to accept a Korean-type war . . . [that] the American people do not understand." The editors felt that U.S. aggression in Southeast Asia antagonized a government in North Vietnam that posed no threat to U.S. security because it merely represented the nationalism of the Vietnamese who wanted to govern themselves. Thus, the Christian Century did not see this stance as contradictory to its castigation of Russia and China. More directly, the periodical suggested that people rationalized the fighting because "we Christians have a pathological need to call our evil good," and so Americans had invented the idea that they had to stop global communism in Vietnam. Finally, the editors questioned the idea that every Communist action threatened American interests; they instead called U.S. actions "colonial in nature." By mid-1968, the Christian Century's editors were claiming that America was "fighting a wrong war, at a wrong time, in a wrong place." Finally, the liberal publication chided the White House for financing a corrupt regime in South Vietnam while simultaneously claiming that it advocated making the country a democracy. According to the liberal periodical, America needed to get out of Vietnam because North Vietnam did not represent the evil communism that existed in China and the Soviet Union.[17]

A more distinct dissimilarity between the Protestant viewpoints manifests itself in the nearly prowar posture of Christianity Today as opposed to the calls for a negotiated peace voiced in the Christian Century. In fact, Christianity Today represents a good example of Americans who advocated military action in Vietnam because they viewed the conflict as a crucial part of the Cold War fight against communism. To this end, the editors promoted an American Council of Churches' mission "to encourage out [sic] fighting men" in their battle "against the atheistic Communist aggressors." This mission referred to the Southeast Asian trip a number of Evangelical pastors took to encourage American troops with sermons and private consultations with the clergy. They justified this position by claiming that the "Communists wish to impose their will on millions of South Vietnamese who don't want it." They also denounced other clergy who "rush to congressmen with sacred advice on how to conduct secular affairs" and maintained their gratitude "that the wobbling wall between state and church has not yet collapsed." Furthermore, they printed a poll of Protestant Americans that maintained that "more than half believe the 'United States should use all military strength necessary (short of nuclear weapons) to achieve victory in the war.'" In fact, the editors often published articles that called for sensitivity regarding "justifiable war." Thus, Christianity Today linked its hatred of Russia and China with the Vietnam War and continued its staunch antagonism toward any Communists.[18]

Aside from balancing its Cold War hostilities of Communist superpowers with a blessing for the Vietnam War, Christianity Today also called for supporting American efforts on the basis of saving Christian missionaries in Southeast Asia against vicious attacks from the immoral Vietcong or, as one evangelist put it, "you have to understand the Oriental to know how clever and vicious" Vietcong attacks tended to be against their opponents, including the missionaries. Indeed, much of this criticism was justified because the Vietcong did arbitrarily kill innocent missionaries. But because no documents survive to explain exactly what the missionaries were doing in the war-torn land, it is also dangerous to assume that the missionaries had nothing to do with the fighting. It is possible that they aided the South Vietnamese war effort by harboring their troops, storing war materials, or operating enemy hospitals. Still, the Vietcong ruthlessly attacked some missionaries. For example, one story in Christianity Today related how the Vietcong had machine-gunned a twenty-nine-year-old volunteer to death after he tried to help wounded Vietnamese soldiers. Another, more gruesome, article reported the massacre in Ban Me Thuot of four missionaries who found themselves caught in the middle of an attack in which two of them were "shot on the spot" while trying to get medical aid for an injured American colleague. The presence of missionaries in the middle of a war thus added fuel to the prowar fire when they became the victims of a guerrilla war. Furthermore, the Vietcong attacks antagonized the editors' distrust of anything relating to communism because of their oppressive tactics.[19]

Christianity Today's veiled arguments promoting the war often gave way to more direct calls for military action to bring about a win in this vital fight against global communism. Declaring that "the American public as a whole supports [the war]," one writer claimed that "for the security of the United States . . . , resisting the Communists' military effort to take over South Vietnam is necessary." He further asserted that failure meant the domination of communism throughout Asia because an "aggressor must either be fought or allowed to wreak his wrath on his victim." The editors buttressed this point by claiming that "America wants peace and is forced to use war to secure it." On a larger scale, they urged the "Vietnamization" of the war and a subsequent "honorable" American exit as "the best of the available alternatives," "though far from ideal." In justifying their support for Vietnamization, the editors calmed anxieties about leaving innocent Vietnamese to the mercy of North Vietnam by naively claiming that the "South Vietnamese are showing admirable military capabilities" and would not automatically fall to the Communist enemy. Moreover, one editorial went so far as to proclaim that "Mr. Nixon's hand was forced" to instigate the bombings of Cambodia because of North Vietnam's unwillingness to negotiate. Even after the withdrawal of U.S. troops, the journal praised American involvement by calling the United States's continuance of military aid "proper." Therefore, Christianity Today's prowar zeal maintained the editors' Cold War ardor against any Communist governments, whether Russia, China, or North Vietnam, and made it a periodical firmly opposed to all forms of communism.[20]

Christianity Today's presentation of the prowar Protestant opinion about the Vietnam War differs sharply with the Christian Century, which symbolized the fight to end the conflict. As early as December 1964, the editors "support[ed] a negotiated peace in South Vietnam." But as politicians continued to call for peace with honor, the editors proclaimed that "if the United States courageously and relentlessly seeks peace in Vietnam, it will not have to worry about its international reputation." This idea underscores an important point. The Christian Century was a patriotic periodical throughout the war and never wavered from supporting American democracy as the ideal government; the editors championed the United States in its Cold War stance against the Soviet Union and China by thinking that these Communist nations represented a threat to America and Christianity. Thus, their antiwar stance stemmed from a belief that America was pursuing the wrong course only in Southeast Asia, and needed to understand that the war was only a civil war, not a danger to U.S. global security. For example, in discussing Vietnamese support for communism, the journal asserted that "we do not like the People's Revolutionary Party; it is not the government we would select for the Vietnamese. But if the majority of the Vietnamese want it, why should

American boys die to keep them from having it?" Also, the editors blasted President Nixon's escalation of the bombings by pointing out that the tonnage of bombs, which had increased from an average of 60,000 tons under Johnson to 95,000 under Nixon, did not sway the North Vietnamese government but only killed and maimed innocent villagers. As the war dragged on, the journal became increasingly impatient and beseeched Americans to continue protesting despite the fact that resistance began to diminish in the 1970s, but it simultaneously continued to advocate Cold War hostilities and patriotism against Russia and China.[21]

To stress the Christian Century's desire for an end to American involvement in a civil war, the editors' writings often became sardonic. For example, Johnson's 1966 decision to stop bombing North Vietnam for a brief period to induce the Communists to the bargaining table brought cries of derision in one article that asked, "what kind of cruel mockery is this killing and ceasing from killing according to clock and calendar?" The Nixon presidency received similar treatment, as when the final exit of American troops induced the response that the word "honor" did not apply to the settlement because it was merely "the culminating horror of a series of horrors." Letters to the editor also supported the journal's antiwar position. One reader denounced the belief that the United States had to negotiate from a position of strength because he felt that "stalemate, actually, may be the only realistic basis for negotiation." Even the prospects for peace did not hearten the editors' overwhelming "sense of shame" because Americans never admitted their mistaken thinking that the Vietnam War was crucial in the struggle against the evil Communists in Russia and China.[22]

The letters to the editor of the Christian Century often applauded the periodical's antiwar stance, although some voiced apprehension about simply stopping the bombing and attacks altogether, hoping instead for peace negotiations only when the opportunity availed itself. In addition, readers voiced Cold War concerns about all Communists by doubting that Hanoi desired peace and arguing that the fighting could not come to an end until North Vietnam agreed to bargain. Still other readers reflected the Cold War sentiments of Christianity Today and implored the Christian Century to understand why the United States had to fight to keep Southeast Asia away from Soviet and Chinese control. People criticized the editors for ignoring the "communist war of aggression" into South Vietnam and urged them to give "at least some indication of awareness of the wrongs being perpetrated by the other side." In short, the readers, like the majority of patrons reading Christianity Today, feared that the Communists wanted to take over the world. In fact, readers considered the North Vietnamese Russian puppets and therefore defended the corruption in South Vietnam as better than Soviet tyranny. In a forewarning of slavery, a writer proclaimed that "when my neighbor--my brother--is threatened with enslavement and seeks help, I feel no sacrifice is too great to save him." Another reader eloquently invoked theological ideals by reminding the editors that "Jesus told his followers that they should be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves" and quoted the famous theologian Reinhold Niebuhr's assertion that "Christians appear to take the second part of the injunction more seriously." As such readers demonstrate, while the Christian Century worked hard to turn Christians against the Vietnam carnage, many liberal Protestants clung to Cold War rhetoric and feared Communist aggression as ultimately threatening to U.S. sovereignty.[23]

Not surprisingly, the editorial staffs at both periodicals also differed in their opinions of the Vietnam-era presidents. Beginning with Johnson, Christianity Today defended the Oval Office and implored Americans to respect the government, which it believed was acting in the country's best interests by fighting the expansion of Soviet and Chinese communism into Southeast Asia. In 1965, the editors called Johnson a "brave soldier" and begged him not to "yield to opponents of a sound policy in Vietnam" that protected the world from communism. A year later, they reiterated their defense by proclaiming that Americans "respect not those leaders who quaver at the blasts of critics . . . but those who would rather be right than be President." In addition, the periodical's acclaimed reverend Billy Graham asserted that "Americans should back their President in his decision to make a stand in Viet Nam." Finally, in eulogizing the final days of Johnson's presidency, the editors asserted that "it could turn out that his Viet Nam stand was his greatest achievement" because he defended America's Cold War stance against Russian and Chinese Communist aggression.[24]

Christianity Today's respect for the president continued during the Nixon administration, when the editors entreated citizens to "rally behind him and give his plan [the alleged secret plan to end the war] a bit more time to succeed." Interestingly, they never explained the apparent contradiction of this support for Nixon's Vietnam policy with their simultaneous dislike for his relations with Red China. But in regard to Vietnam, the Evangelical magazine proudly decreed that "rallies, threats of impeachment, and the like will not deter him--nor should they." The editors also joined the president in opposing the release of the Pentagon Papers, worrying that they infringed upon Nixon's ability to keep state secrets and claiming that the New York Times blatantly broke the law with such a news release. Moreover, Christianity Today took the opportunity to praise Nixon because he "succeeded" in bringing U.S. participation to a conclusion. The editors did not worry about South Vietnam falling to the Communists upon an American withdrawal because they firmly believed the presidential rhetoric that guaranteed that Vietnamization had secured the ability of South Vietnam to defend itself. Therefore, the editorial staff at Christianity Today felt that Americans had a patriotic duty to support Johnson's and Nixon's struggle in Vietnam because the United States could not allow the Communists to win, even in this small country.[35]

At the same time, the Christian Century openly questioned the presidents and condemned their stances on Vietnam as a mistaken application of Cold War policy, which it believed should only center on the true threats to America, namely China and the Soviet Union. The editors feared that the world might see many of Johnson's statements as "deliberately threatening." For example, when he explained that "there will be some nervous Nellies" who will turn against their leaders and armed forces despite the fact America had to fight this battle against communism, the Christian Century took exception to this by printing the Dictionary of American Slang's definition of a nervous Nellie as a "jittery old cow" and wondered if the president realized he included "respected church leaders, . . . professors," and other elected officials in that statement. In a later issue, they readdressed this subject and maintained that part of Johnson's weariness toward protestors stemmed from their responsible actions and large numbers, which made the president wonder whether he had erred in not listening to them. Finally, the Christian Century hoped, in a vastly different eulogy than what appeared in Christianity Today, that Johnson's "withdrawal [from the 1968 election] will prove to have marked the beginning of a new political epoch," one that would presumably understand the difference between the need to guard against Cold War superpowers and to fight in a civil war.[26]

After continually blasting Johnson's polices, the first year of Nixon's presidency was met with cautious optimism at the Christian Century, whose editors wanted to believe that he might try to end the war. But this temporary armistice only intensified the Christian Century's eventual condemnation of Nixon for initiating the 1970 Cambodian bombings. Calling the bombings an international blunder, the editors accused Nixon of tearing the government and people further apart by breaking the trust of the American people. Three years later, as the bombings continued, the journal reported "numbness and sorrow" because "peace is no longer at hand" and called Nixon's foreign policy in Southeast Asia "a tragically wrong national policy of self-defeating imperialism." Finally, they kept beseeching the president to end this "national disgrace" and focus his foreign policy on peaceful efforts to win the Cold War against Russia and China with negotiations that might lead to an infiltration of American principles and Christianity into those countries.[27]

Clearly, Christianity Today and the Christian Century diametrically opposed one another on topics regarding the Vietnam War. While the liberal publication derided the presidents and applauded all efforts for peace, the Evangelical periodical called for respecting the White House and aiding the government in its fight against communism. But neither journal viewed its Vietnam position as contradictory to its hostility toward the Soviet Union and China. The Christian Century saw Vietnam as a problem because American involvement wrongly applied Cold War fears of communism to a civil war. The editors asserted that no justifiable reason existed to explain U.S. actions against Vietnamese self-determination. But the more conservative _Christianity Today_ agreed with presidential policy and defended the Cold War belief that once one country fell to communism it threatened the sovereignty of the United States because they linked all Communist governments to the Soviet Union. The periodicals' differences also held true for Vietnam issues not discussed here, such as draft resistance, the protest movement, and the morality of fighting in Southeast Asia. The liberal versus conservative ideology of these journals ably demonstrates how the differences between those who supported the war in Vietnam and those who castigated U.S. intervention on behalf of a corrupt regime and against the will of the Vietnamese people did not contradict either side's continuance of Cold War rhetoric against the Soviet Union and China. Thus, Americans could debate U.S. actions in Vietnam while still joining together to continue their irrational fears of a Soviet-led Communist attempt to dominate the world.

The liberal _Christian Century_ and the Evangelical _Christianity Today_ therefore demonstrate that Americans in the 1960s coupled Cold War hostilities toward the Soviet Union and China with their debate over U.S. involvement in Vietnam. _Christianity Today_'s editors and readers sustained Cold War fears by discussing Vietnam because they believed that all Communists, including those in Vietnam, were working together to take over the world. But the _Christian Century_ saw the Vietnam War as a civil war in which the Vietnamese merely fought to choose their own government. This policy therefore allowed them to simultaneously continue their Cold War fear that the Soviet Union and China threatened Christians and democracy around the world. Therefore, these periodicals reveal how Americans debated the Vietnam War and still agreed about the need for a standoff against other Communist superpowers.

End Notes

1.A plethora of volumes study the political and combat aspects of the Vietnam War; for a good survey see George C. Herring, America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975 (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1986). Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield's An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990) offers the most comprehensive study of the peace movement. But like most investigations, these examinations fail to scrutinize in any detail the debate's prowar side. David W. Levy attempts to contrast the prowar and antiwar attitudes but only presents a book for use in survey courses. Although this book serves as a valuable resource, it contributes little to a full understanding of both viewpoints. See The Debate over Vietnam (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

2.Gallup Political Indexes, June 1965 through December 1975 (Gallup International: The American Institute of Public Opinion); Dr. George Gallup, The Gallup Poll of Public Opinion, 1835-1971 (New York: Random House Publishers, 1972).

3.Few treatments of Vietnam era religious life currently exist. However, a few religious volumes mirror other histories that ignore the prowar sentiment or prove too limited to aid an inclusive understanding. Mitchell K. Hall provides a solid study of the religious organization formed to protest American involvement in Vietnam in Because of their Faith: CALCAV and Religious Opposition to the Vietnam War (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Also, two dissertations bear mentioning. Michael Brooks Friedland examines activist clergy in "'To Proclaim the Acceptable Year of Our Lord': Social Activism and Ecumenical Cooperation Among White Clergy in the Civil

Rights and Antiwar Movements of the 1950's and 1960's (Civil Rights Movement, Antiwar Movement)" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 1993). In "Religious Faith and Civil Religion: Evangelical Responses to the Vietnam War, 1964-1973" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1988), Andrew LeRoy Pratt explores prowar sentiments among the Evangelical community but focuses myopically on a few sub-groupings within this vast community.

4.For circulation statistics see Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory (New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1968), 779, 782, 1045, 1103.

5."Another Finger on the Button," Christian Century (Hereafter CC) 81 (14 October 1964): 1259-60; "Seeing China As It Is," CC 83 (12 January 1966): 37-38.

6.Donald MacInnis, "The Secular Vision of a New Humanity in People's China," Christianity Today (Hereafter CT) 92 (12 March 1975): 249-53; Tung Chi-Ping, "Dissent on China," CC 83 (28 September 1966): 1183.

7.George N. Patterson, "Christianity Behind the Bamboo Curtain," CT 9 (30 July 1965): 11-12; "Nixon, China, and Religious Freedom," CT 16 (4 February 1969): 20-21; "The Church in China," CT 19 (17 March 1972): 37-39.

8.Dick Hillis, "The Locked-in Generation," CT 13 (1969): 10-11; idem, "Who Will Mourn Chairman Mao?" CT 17 (24 November 1972): 4-5; "Red Guards: China's Mini-Mao Revivalists," CT 11 (3 February 1967): 48-49; "Red Guards Spur Attack on Christian Remnant in Communist China," CT 10 (16 September 1966): 29-30; Paul Szto, "The Chinese Communist Mind," CT 16 (14 April 1972): 14-18.

9."The Church, Politics, and the NCC," CT 11 (14 October 1966): 35-36; Robert Larson, "China: Open Door to What?" CT 15 (27 August 1971): 3-4.

10.B. P. Dotsenko, "From Communism to Christianity," CT 17 (5 January 1973): 4-12; "Freedom From Religion in the Soviet Union," CT 92 (5 November 1975):

987-88; "On the Lord's Side," CT 9 (4 June 1965): 28; "Nikita Khrushchev," CT 16 (8 October 1971): 33.

11."Carrying the Cross in the U.S.S.R.," CT 19 (20 December 1974): 26-27; "Russia's Reform Baptists and the WCC," CC 92 (26 February 1975): 187-88; "The Damper on Détente," CT 19 (28 February 1975): 33; "No Memo For Brezhnev," CT 17 (22 June 1973): 23-25.

12.Michael Bourdeaux, "Religious Publishing in the Soviet Union," CC 86 (30 April 1969): 626-27; J. Robert Nelson, "Orthodoxy in Russia," CC 83 (28 September 1968): 1170-71.

13."A Plea For Soviet Churches," CT 8 (25 September 1964): 58-60; "Soviet Christians Assert Legal Rights," CT 12 (24 November 1967): 43-44; David E. Kucharsky, "Russian Revolution Yields Bitter Fruit," CT 14 (24 April 1970): 42; Janice A. Broun, "Evangelism in the U.S.S.R.," CT 18 (21 June 1974): 11-16; J. C. Pollock, "Christian Youth in Soviet Schools," CT 8 (28 August 1964): 3-5.

14.Harold A. Bosley, "The Struggle for Religious Faith in the Soviet Union Today," CC 84 (23 August 1967): 1082-84; Paul Verghese, "The Flame of Faith Is Not Out in the U.S.S.R.," CC 88 (12 May 1971): 580-81; Edward E. Plowman, "Deep in the Heart of Eastern Europe," CT 17 (5 January 1973): 44-45; "Religion in the Soviet Union: On-the-Scene Observations," CC 90 (4 April 1973): 402-3.

15."U.S. Communists Revive Old Strategy," CC 83 (21 September 1966): 1138; "Pastor Helps Communist Party in Kentucky Ballot Effort," CC 89 (1 November 1972): 1090; J. Edgar Hoover, "The Faith of Our Fathers," CT 8 (11 September 1964): 6-7; Edward E. Plowman, "The Making of a Marxist," CT 11 (3 March 1967): 43; "Radicals on the Rampage," CT 15 (6 November 1970): 33-34.

16."North Viet Nam Case Study," Christianity Today 13 (22 November 1968): 44-5; "All the King's Horses," CT 12 (16 February 1968): 5.

17."An Echo, Not a Choice," Christian Century 81 (19 August 1964): 1028-29; "Why Are We Fighting in Vietnam?" CC 82 (24 February 1965): 230; "Inverted Truth, Subverted Dream," CC 83 (28 December 1966): 1591-92; George W. Shepherd, Jr., "Understanding 'People's War,'" CC 84 (20 September 1967): 1185-88; Tran Van Dinh, "Six Hours That Changed the Vietnam Situation," CC 85 (6 March 1968): 289-91; "Why the War in Vietnam Cannot Be Won," CC 85 (24 July 1968): 937-38; "Whatever Happened to Vietnam's 'Other War'?" CC 88 (17 March 1971): 350-53.

18."Rival Churchmen in Viet Nam," CT 11 (7 July 1967): 36; "On Leaving It to Hanoi," CT 17 (13 October 1972): 36; "War and Peace in Viet Nam," CT 11 (17 February 1967): 29; "Hawks in the Pews," CT 12 (12 April 1968): 36; "Onward, Christian Soldiers?" CT 17 (2 February 1973): 15.

19."Missionary Describes Siege at Dalat," CT 12 (15 March 1968): 36-37; "Viet Cong Kill Young Missionary," CT 10 (4 February 1966): 48; "Viet Nam: The Vulnerable Ones," "Six Missionaries Martyred in Viet Nam," CT 12 (1 March 1968): 16-19, 37.

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21."Getting Out of Vietnam," CC 81 (23 December 1964): 1582-83; "Saving Face in Vietnam," CC 83 (27 August 1966): 517-18; "What the Vietnamese Want," CC 84

(12 April 1967): 461-62; "The Air War in Indochina: Some Responses," CC 88 (1 December 1971): 1404-5; "The Mirrors of Asia Policy," CC 89 (16 February 1972): 183.

22."Eight-Day Truce in Vietnam," CC 83 (14 December 1966): 1528; "'Honorable' Peace: Final Self-Deception," CC 90 (7 February 1973): 139; Warren Griffiths, "Now Is the Time," CC 82 (7 April 1965): 433; "The Possibility of Peace," CC 89 (8 November 1972): 1121.

23.Bob Koller, "Views on Vietnam," CC 83 (26 January 1966): 121; H. Richardson Rasmusson, "He Doesn't Buy It," CC 84 (22 November 1967): 1498; James W. Mull, "Uncomplicated View," CC 85 (10 January 1968): 45; Donald A. Krause, "Still, Vietnam," CC 83 (5 October 1966): 1216; Charles H. Kamp, "Vietnam and Morality," CC 84 (1 March 1967): 278; Geraldine Fitch, "Vietnam, China," CC 83 (25 May 1966): 683; Lando Otto, "Pro and Con Us," CC 85 (20 March 1968): 362; Albert E. Gardner, "Assaulted!" CC 84 (22 February 1967): 244; George A. Fitch, "War? So Be It!" CC 84 (18 October 1967): 1320; Robert S. Beaman, "Vietnam Views," CC 84 (19 July 1967): 941-42.

24."Halting Red Aggression in Viet Nam," CT 9 (23 April 1965): 32; "The Political Tightrope," CT 10 (30 September 1966): 34; "The Right to Know," CT 15 (16 July 1971): 22-23; "Graham Preaches Peace in Viet Nam," CT 11 (20 January 1967): 36; "Farewell to Mr. Johnson," CT 13 (31 January 1969): 40.

25."The President's Viet Nam Policy," CT 14 (21 November 1969): 25; "Plain Talk on Viet Nam," CT 16 (26 May 1972): 27; "Fifteen Turbulent Years," CT 18 (30 August 1974): 24-26.

26."Is Dissent Traitorous?" CC 83 (1 June 1966): 703-4; "Johnson Condemns Critics," CC 84 (29 March 1967): 397-98; "The McNamara Move," CC 84 (13 December 1967): 1588-89; "Aftermath of Withdrawal," CC 85 (10 April 1968):

443-45.

27."A Shattered Trust," CC 87 (13 May 1970): 587; "Evacuating the Children," CC 90 (3 January 1973): 3; "A 60-Day Death Extension," CC 90 (1 August 1973): 771-72.

News Pegs and the National Farmers Organization: Episodic and Life-Span Patterns of Press Coverage

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News Pegs and the National Farmers Organization: Episodic and Life-Span Patterns of Press Coverage

News pegs are an immutable journalistic convention. Events signal timeliness, are easier to cover than issues (ascertaining the beginning and end requires less reportorial expertise) and draw on fewer organizational resources.[1] Dramatic events are assumed to hold an audience's attention better than stories about underlying problems, causes or values.[2] In addition, many events lend themselves to pictorial coverage.

The reliance of journalists on news pegs reflects a dependence on timely, manageable events that require few resources to cover.[3] It also suggests that media coverage focuses on events and not necessarily on their meaning.[4] To test this generalization, it is necessary to investigate the relationship between specific events and their press coverage. To avoid the effects of organizational solicitation of media coverage, this study examines events that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s that involved an organization that actively shunned media coverage.

The National Farmers Organization (NFO) was created in the fall of 1955 by a group of midwestern farmers who sought government action to improve their economic plight.[5] After unsuccessfully lobbying officials in Washington, the group adopted a program in 1958 of collective bargaining reinforced by what became known as holding actions. These were designated periods when farmers were encouraged to refrain from selling certain commodities. Some holding actions were merely tests of the NFO's organizational strength. Others were used to withhold commodities until the NFO could secure contracts that would temporarily guarantee prices.[6]

Holding actions often left farmers with produce that was perishable or too expensive to keep. Thus, many farmers destroyed livestock, burned crops or dumped milk. Despite public condemnation of what many Americans viewed as violence,[7] farmers continued to destroy their surplus produce. In addition, incidents erupted between NFO members and non-participating farmers, including fence-cutting, tire-slashing, fires, and explosions.[8] During a demonstration at the Equity Livestock Cooperative stockyard in Bonduel, Wisconsin, two NFO members were killed when they were struck by a cattle truck.

The NFO officially as well as unofficially avoided media coverage -- and therefore newspaper articles of its actions offer a look at press coverage relatively unencumbered by outside organizational biases. This unusual situation would be nearly impossible to replicate with a contemporary social movement.

Despite the NFO's attempts to discourage coverage, media were drawn to the violence in Middle America. As a result, a detailed account of a social movement and the press coverage that advanced its legitimization[9] were produced.

NFO holding actions lend themselves well to an examination of the news coverage of events; the likelihood of violence made them newsworthy, and their duration was clearly delineated -- the dates of the onset and termination of each holding action were announced to its members by the NFO.

Research concerning the use of newspaper sources generally analyzes individual stories rather than the relative development of source use over the life of an issue.[10] But changes in source use during coverage over time may reveal important information about source use. This study is a longitudinal analysis of how journalists reported the activities of the NFO. The research has two purposes: 1) to analyze the relationship between events and news coverage, and 2) to examine how source use changed in relation to coverage.[11]

Method

The data used in this study are derived from a study of the NFO sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture.[12] The data forms the basis for this study's content analysis of articles about the NFO printed in the New York Times, the Des Moines Register, and the Minneapolis

Tribune. The Des Moines Register was chosen because during the years studied (1955 to 1980) the NFO headquarters was in Corning, Iowa, and many of its activities occurred in Iowa. The Minneapolis Tribune was chosen because Minnesotans were involved in NFO activities. The Register and the Tribune also were their states largest newspapers. The New York Times was used because it is a national newspaper and is "the obvious choice for the study of the impact of newspaper coverage on a social movement".[13] It also provides an analysis of the difference between coverage by a national newspaper and two midwestern newspapers.

All articles published by the three newspapers from 1955 to 1980 that mentioned the NFO were analyzed. The fully indexed New York Times was examined first. Indexes of the Des Moines Register and the Minneapolis Tribune were used when applicable. For years not indexed, the newspapers were examined page-by-page for five days preceding and five days following the dates of published articles from the other newspapers. If additional articles were found, articles published within five days preceding and following those dates were examined.

Three coders entered a total of 590 articles. All articles and accompanying photographs were content analyzed. Articles were coded for up to forty paragraphs. Because news writing often places source attributions below the lead, the unit of analysis in this study was the first five paragraphs of each article.

The variables PRIOR, DURING, POST and INTERV were created to examine press coverage of specific NFO activities. Starting and ending dates were determined for all holding actions. Values labels 1 through 5 designate specific events. The variable DURING includes all dates during NFO holding actions. The variable PRIOR includes all dates within 10 days prior to each holding action. The variable POST includes all dates within 10 days following the cessation of each holding action. The variable INTERV includes all dates following POST and preceding PRIOR periods of time. The following chart provides the dates and duration of each value label.

Value	Dates	Days
1INT (interval)	10/09/55 to 3/23/61	1,998
1PRI (prior)	3/24/61 to 4/1/61	10
1DUR (during)	4/2/61 to 4/19/61	16
1PST (post)	4/20/61 to 4/29/61	10
2INT (interval)	4/30/61 to 8/20/62	493
2PRI (prior)	8/21/62 to 8/29/62	10
2DUR (during)	8/30/62 to 10/3/62	33
2PST (post)	10/4/62 to 10/13/62	10
3INT (interval)	10/14/62 to 8/8/64	680
3PRI (prior)	8/9/64 to 8/17/64	10
3DUR (during)	8/18/64 to 10/2/64	44
3PST (post)	10/3/64 to 10/12/64	10
4INT (interval)	10/13/64 to 3/4/67	889
4PRI (prior)	3/5/67 to 3/13/67	10
4DUR (during)	3/14/67 to 4/7/67	23
4PST (post)	4/8/67 to 4/17/67	10

5INT (interval)	4/18/67 to 12/30/67	274
5PRI (prior)	12/31/67 to 1/9/68	10
5DUR (during)	1/10/68 to 4/17/68	96
5PST (post)	4/18/68 to 4/27/68	10

ID OF SOURCE IN PARAGRAPH is defined as the identity of information sources within a paragraph. Sources are identified by level within their organizations. Individuals may be of national, state, local or unknown level. The variable identifies the source of information in the paragraph even when the information is not presented as a direct quote. The coding instrument allows for the coding of up to two sources per paragraph. Sources may be named individuals, titled individuals, an organization, individuals with no identification, or the reporter.

VIOLENCE MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH involves incidents such as milk dumping, crop burning, livestock slaughtering, gun carrying, gun shooting, pushing, shoving and similar behavior.

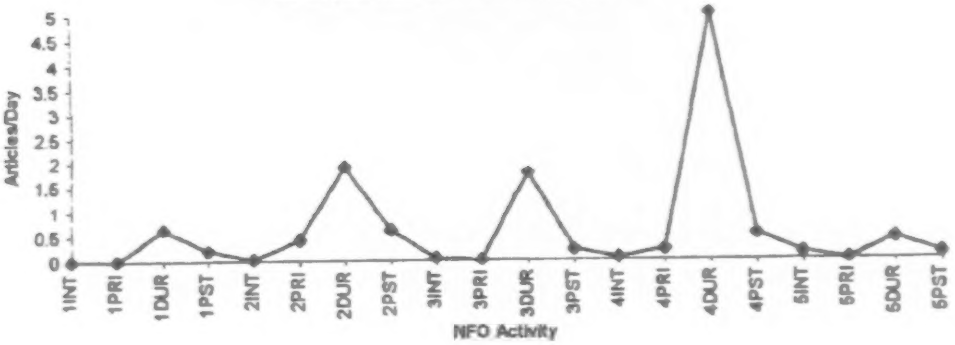
Intercoder reliability for coding the variables was computed using a sample of three articles from each newspaper. A total of 1,228 variables were analyzed and Scott's pi was computed for each pair of coders. A composite intercoder reliability score of .92 was determined.

Episodic Newspaper Coverage

Three-hundred five articles dealing with NFO holding actions were published in the three newspapers between 1955 and 1968, accounting for 69.5 percent of all coverage of the NFO during that period. 25.5 percent of the coverage occurred during intervals between holding actions. Only 5 percent of all newspaper coverage occurred within ten days prior to and ten days following holding actions.

Figure 1

Ratio Articles/Day about NFO published by The New York Times, Minneapolis Tribune, Des Moines Register



The length and frequency of NFO holding actions varied considerably. Figure 1 indicates how newspaper coverage corresponded to these changes over time. During the intervals between holding actions, there was only moderate coverage and this varied very little during the years examined. A considerably higher number of articles were published per day during holding actions. Although the higher ratio suggests a pattern of episodic newspaper coverage, the inconsistency of this coverage invites further examination.

The number of articles covering the NFO paralleled an overall increase in the length of each holding action -- except for the last two holding actions. Coverage during the fourth holding action increased substantially although it lasted only 23 days. Coverage of the fifth holding action dropped considerably during its 96-day span. This suggests that holding actions were outliving their newsworthiness.

The NFO generally showed contempt for the media. It was stingy with information and discouraged its members from listening to or reading media coverage.[14] Organizational success was measured by economic gains or by membership recruitment. Eventually, however, the NFO recognized the benefits of media coverage and became more amenable toward the press. The decision to stop holding actions in 1968 was viewed by the NFO, at least in part, as a way to control what it saw as negative coverage of the violence that occurred. NFO officials had doubtlessly underestimated the significance of violence in attracting media coverage.

A Lifespan Coverage Pattern

The difference in the overall number of articles concerning the NFO that were published by the three newspapers examined in this study is not significant. The

New York Times printed 41 percent of the articles covering the NFO, the Minneapolis Tribune published 32 percent and the Des Moines Register published 27 percent of the stories.

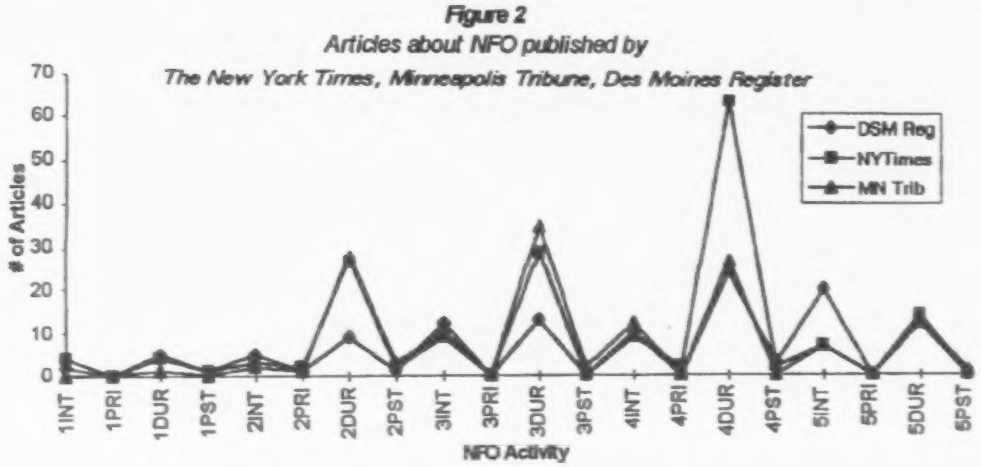


Figure 2
Articles about NFO published by
The New York Times, Minneapolis Tribune, Des Moines Register

Figure 2 reveals distinctly different, although clearly episodic, patterns of coverage during certain time periods. Coverage by The New York Times peaked dramatically during the fourth holding action. Des Moines Register coverage, in contrast, increased only moderately during the fourth holding action. Its relatively heavy coverage of NFO activity the rest of the year was probably due to the paper's close proximity to the NFO's Corning, Iowa, headquarters. Coverage of non-holding action activity remained fairly constant over time, in part due to the consistency of information provided by the NFO concerning its annual business meetings held in Des Moines.

The Minneapolis Tribune's curvilinear coverage is indicative of a second phenomenon affecting protest activity coverage. Although distinctly episodic, the Tribune's coverage increased substantially over time, peaking during the third holding action. This graphically characterizes a *life-span of coverage* effect in which interest in a story builds and then diminishes over time.

The extensive coverage of the fourth holding action by the New York Times may suggest that national media have less to do with defining the legitimacy of a social movement through coverage of specific events than by defining newsworthiness and legitimacy with their overall coverage pattern. It appears that while the emergence of an issue may depend on the coverage of events, the overall endurance may rely on a pattern of coverage by particular media.

Table 1

Frequency of national- and state-level source use by newspapers in NFO coverage in early and late coverage and, in parentheses, as a percentage of total coverage.

ID of Source	Total		Early		Late	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
National official	50	(100.)	14	(28.0)	36	(72.0)
State official	10	(100.)	3	(30.0)	7	(70.0)
Total	60	(100.)	17	(28.3)	43	(71.6)

Use of national and state sources, early vs. later coverage: chi-square=.015 p=.70 d.f.=1

Table 1 indicates that the use of official sources in articles about the NFO increased over time. Seventy-two percent of attributions attributable to national officials and 70 percent of state official attributions occurred during late coverage. As the topic became increasingly familiar, the use of official sources grew. In addition, as Figure 3 indicates, the overall number of attributed sources also increased substantially over time.

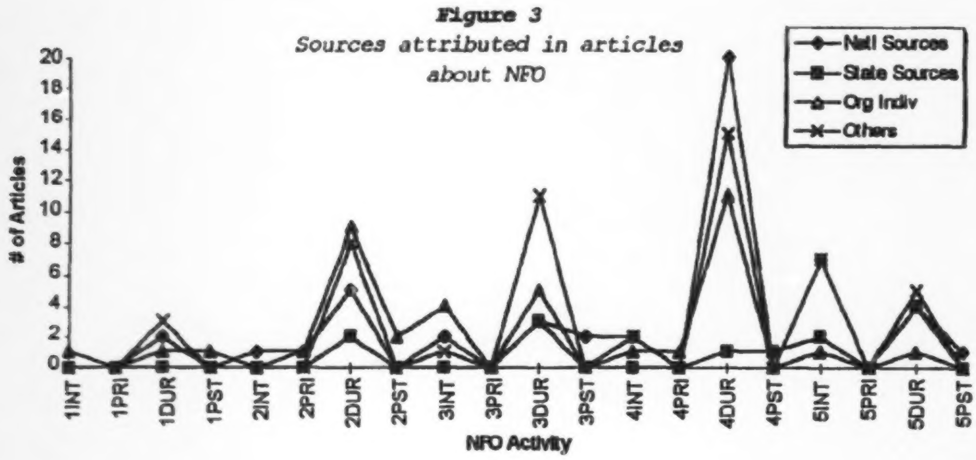


Figure 3
Sources attributed in articles about NFO

Of particular interest is the increased use of non-official, non-organizational individuals as sources during holding actions. An examination of news stories indicates both an increase in the number of soft news stories and an increase in attribution among contrasting individuals -- perhaps as

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an effort to achieve a degree of balance within stories largely dependent on national sources.

As reporters became familiar with the NFO and its activities, they used a narrower range of sources. Figure 3 indicates that there was greater diversity among the sources used during early coverage of protest activity than during later coverage -- in contrast to research arguing that reporters use a narrower range of sources when they are most constrained.[15]

The sudden increase in the use of national sources may have coincided with an increased awareness of the issue's overall social significance. The fourth holding action occurred in the spring of 1967, a period of awakening national social consciousness. Government officials may have used the NFO as a way to exhibit their social awareness. They may also have become more accessible because the NFO was increasingly perceived as a legitimate organization and association with it was less threatening. What cannot be discerned is the impact of the national media's increased activity on sources' willingness to provide information and to be cited.

The decline in use of other individuals and official sources during the NFO's final holding action may represent a change in the media's perception of the social relevancy of NFO protest activity. In turn, the subsequent dramatic decline in newspaper coverage may have precipitated the NFO's policy change to terminate the use of holding actions.

Figure 4

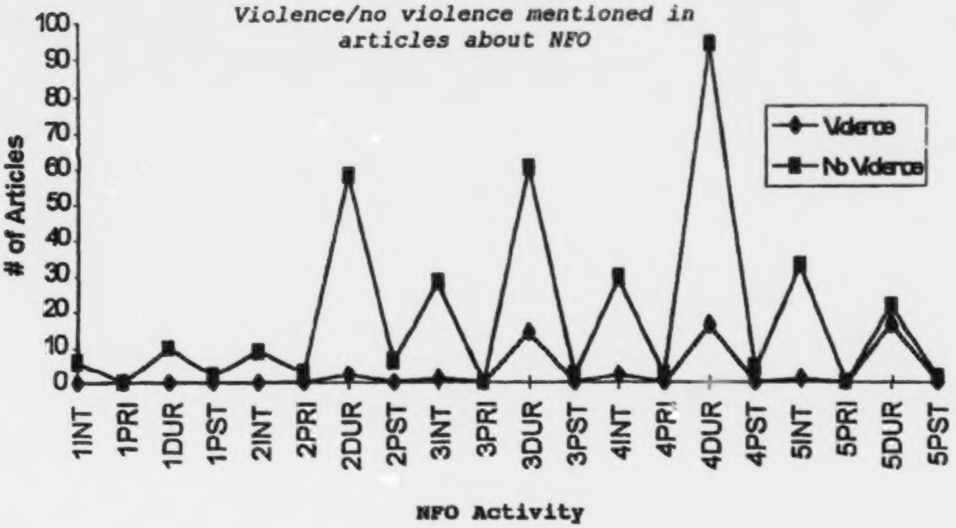

Figure 4 demonstrates that during the final holding action there was no significant drop in the number of articles published concerning violent episodes. But the number of articles concerning nonviolent episodes dropped dramatically -- nearly to the number published during the first holding action -- despite its long duration.

Table 2

Frequency of violence mentioned during coverage of holding actions

Holding Actions	Violence		No Violence	
	N	%	N	%
1	0	(0.0)	10	(4.1)
2	4	(6.7)	60	(24.6)
3	22	(36.7)	55	(22.5)
4	17	(28.3)	97	(39.7)
5	17	(28.3)	22	(9.1)
Total	60	(100.)	244	(100.)

Mention of violence in paragraphs during holding actions:
chi-square=29.28 p=.0000 d.f.=4

A chi-square test was done to determine any difference between the distribution of coverage of violent and nonviolent episodes during holding actions. The test proved significant at p<.0000.

Chi-square did not prove significant for coverage of violent and nonviolent episodes at any other period of time during the years examined. This indicates that violence was a significant factor in the coverage of NFO protest actions. The fact that the number of incidents of violence remained relatively constant during the last three holding actions while newspaper coverage fluctuated dramatically indicates that violence may have served as a trigger for coverage -- it provided the news peg.

The increased use of sources -- particularly of national-level officials and unofficial individuals -- along with the increased number of articles concerning nonviolent issues implies a life-cycle of media coverage that works in conjunction with episodic coverage.

While news pegs induced media coverage, other factors advanced the publishing of a growing number of stories, changes in the nature of the coverage, and the subsequent decrease in coverage. The increasing combination of official and non-official sources in that process may mark a critical point in legitimization that precedes waning interest in the issue by the press.

Discussion

Various analyses reflect the episodic coverage of NFO activity. Nearly 70 percent of the newspaper articles concerning the NFO were published during holding actions. Considering the diversity of newsroom practices among the newspapers examined, coverage of NFO protest activities was remarkably consistent across time -- in each case, although varied in extent, NFO coverage followed an episodic pattern.

Although the New York Times printed more articles about the NFO than either the Minneapolis Tribune or the Des

Moines Register, its coverage occurred almost entirely during holding actions. This may reflect a contrast between urban and rural sensibilities concerning such things as the killing of farm animals. It may also indicate the general interest in farming and farm organizations by the midwestern newspapers.

Another pattern appeared in the analysis -- one that is called life-span coverage. In the process of examining NFO coverage over time, a distinct curvilinear pattern of newspaper coverage emerged in which the number of articles increased steadily for several years, peaked and then declined.

Variations in life-span coverage were apparent for each paper. The New York Times provided a dramatic peak and then drop in coverage over time whereas the Des Moines Register coverage was relatively consistent with few fluctuations. Minneapolis Tribune coverage, plotted over time, created a uniform bell curve. Coverage by this paper peaked during the third holding action and then decreased steadily. One can only surmise whether this influenced the decision by the New York Times to provide its dramatic coverage of the NFO's fourth holding action.

The life-span phenomena is indicative of an evolution in the interaction of the press with the events it covers. Although original coverage may be the result of a relatively simple evaluation of an event by media, subsequent coverage may rest more on media organizational perceptions and judgments than on actual developments in the story.

Over the course of several years the NFO provided a relatively stable format for press coverage. It announced its intentions well in advance along with its overall goals and carried out predictable actions. The nature of these actions were troubling to many, however. The public disposal of unmarketable livestock and produce (according to the terms of the holding actions) was unacceptable to many Americans.

As media wrestled with the newsworthiness of this behavior, it determined what was significant and appropriate for coverage. As a result, the legitimization of the NFO as a social movement may have been a measure of the media's contact with farmers, farm journalists and their increasing understanding of NFO members' behavior.

The coverage of the third holding action by the Minneapolis Tribune may have provided impetus for the New York Times surge of coverage during the fourth holding action. For competitive reasons or perhaps because the issue was simply more clearly defined and understood, the New York Times gave the NFO significant attention during the fourth holding action and then backed away suddenly.

One way journalists learned about the NFO and its concerns was through contact with the organization's national and state officials. The study indicates that the three newspapers increasingly sought contrasting and attributable sources.[16] This reflects the journalistic convention of balance -- as well as an increasing familiarity with the topic and its participants. It may also indicate that the process of information gathering may serve journalistic conventions increasingly during the life-span of coverage.

Coverage of the NFO was related to violence during protest episodes. In analyses of social movements and the media, other research has found that the coverage of violence tends to focus on the action and not on the intentions which prompt the organizations to use violence.[17] Analysis of violence referred to in NFO coverage and the use of sources indicates that while mentions of violence remained relatively consistent across time, the use of both official and unofficial sources of information as well as general coverage increased. It appears from such evidence that violence may be important in initiating news coverage but has little relevance to the nature of that coverage.

Further Research

The length of time examined in this study provides a myriad of opportunities for historical threats to the validity of the findings. The 1960s were volatile years, with an abundance of violent events and social awakenings.

It is reasonable to conclude that these events may have influenced media coverage of the NFO.

Further research should help determine whether news coverage life-spans exist not only across episodes but within episodes as well. Closer examination of particular episodes in the news coverage of a social movement may reflect a life-span phenomena within shorter periods of time. Such an examination may also indicate whether episode length is a factor in newspaper coverage.

In this study the life-span phenomena occurs concurrently with the episodic coverage of the NFO. Further research may help determine whether a series of events involving one organization may induce episodic coverage without generating life-span coverage. Additional study may also determine whether life-span coverage may be initiated, in effect, with any media involvement.

The dramatic decrease in coverage that occurred following the fourth holding action may indicate the NFO's turning point from a non-legitimate social movement to a institutionalized organization.[18] Additional research is needed to ascertain the determinate of the peak that foreshadows the sudden decrease in coverage as well as the organizational processes that occur as a result of this phenomena.

Of additional interest is the changes in the perception of a topic by news media staff. The subjective conclusions drawn by journalists who cover an issue over time may ultimately determine the nature of news coverage. The relative ease with which an issue is reported may influence the story content, the likelihood of future articles and the newspaper's determination of the issue's social relevance. This process may very well effect the evolution of a social movement.

Notes

[1] Richard Kielbowicz and Clifford Scherer. "The Role of the Press in the Dynamics of Social Movements," in Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Vol. 9, eds. Kurt Lang, Gladys Engel Lang, Louis Kriesberg (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1986).

[2] Graham Murdock, "Political Deviance: The Press Presentation of a Militant Mass Demonstration," in The Manufacture of News, eds. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973) pp. 156-175; Edie N. Goldenberg, Making the Papers: The Access of Resource-Poor Groups to the Metropolitan Press (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1975).

[3] Richard Kielbowicz and Clifford Scherer. "The Role of the Press in the Dynamics of Social Movements," in Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Vol. 9, eds. Kurt Lang, Gladys Engel Lang, Louis Kriesberg (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1986).

[4] See Murdock, "Political Deviance," Harvey Molotch, "Media and Movements," in The Dynamics of Social Movements, eds. Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy, (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, Inc., 1979); David M. Berg, "Rhetoric, Reality, and Mass Media," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 58:256-263 (October 1972); Goldenberg, Making the Papers, for research supporting this conclusion.

[5] This study uses the typology of social movements of Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian in Collective Behavior, (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1957) pp. 327-329, that is based on key characteristics. The emphasis of the NFO is that of a value-oriented movement in which the principal support for the movement is derived from a conviction of the worth of the program for change. It is the prospect of the achievement of that change that provides the main impetus for commitment.

[6] Truman D. Wood, "The National Farmers Organization in Transition." Ph.D. diss., State University of Iowa, Ames, 1961.

[7] John Kerr, "Interview with Richard Youngblood," unpublished manuscript, 1985. Youngblood was the farm editor of the Minneapolis Star-Tribune during the period studied. Youngblood said, "I never got the sense that there was any kind of a propensity for plotting violence." If anything happened, he said, "it would have been spontaneous."

Throughout the 1960s the NFO's mouthpiece, NFO Reporter, denied any deliberate involvement in violence by the organization. In and editorial on violence published in the October issue, NFO President Oren Staley wrote, "The NFO's position on violence of any type has always been clear. The NFO has not and does not approve of or recommend the use of violence."

[8] Celia Shapland, "Protest in the newspaper: A case study of the National Farmers Organization." Master's thesis, Iowa State University, 1986.

[9] This legitimization process is essentially related to Lazarsfeld and Merton's notion of the "status conferal" function of the press: by acknowledging a person, issue, group, or event, the media essentially make it authentic. P.F. Lazarsfeld and R.K. Merton, "Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organized Social Action," in L. Bryson, ed., The Communication of Ideas (New York: The Institute for Relgious and Social Studies, 1948). Reprinted in W. Schramm and D.F. Roberts, ed., The Process and Effects of Mass Communication, Revised Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971).

[10] Such studies include Leon V. Sigal's "Reporters and Officials: The Organization and Politics of Newsmaking" (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1973) and "Sources Make the News," in Robert Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson, eds., Reading the News (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), pp. 9-37; Stephen Lacy and David Matustik, "Dependence on Organization and Beat Sources for Story Ideas: A Case Study of Four Newspapers," Newspaper Research Journal, 5:9-16 (Winter 1983); Jane Delano Brown, Carl R. Bybee, Stanley T. Wearden and Dulcie Murdock Straughan, "Invisible Power: Newspaper News Sources and the Limits of Diversity," Journalism Quarterly, 64:45-54 (Spring 1987); Fred Fico, "Influence of Perceived Editorial Concern and Role Concept on Source Reliance," Journalism Quarterly, 63:322 (Spring 1986).

[11] One reason to examine source use is its role in "media convergence," a tendency for media to focus on the same story at the same time. See Stephen Reese and Lucig Danielian, "Inter-Media Influence and the Drug Issue: Converging on Cocaine," in P. Shoemaker, ed., Communication Campaigns About Drugs: Government, Media and the Public. (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1988) and Dominic L. Lasorsa and Stephen D. Reese, "News Source Use in the Crash of 1987: A Study of Four National Media," Journalism Quarterly, 67:60-71 (Spring 1990).

[12] Project number 58-3J31-3-0030: "Communication techniques of a major farmer movement: A case study."

[13] Todd Gitlin, The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

[14] Richard Youngblood, former farm editor of the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, claimed the NFO first offered his newspaper press releases two years after the organization first received significant media coverage (in 1964). See Kerr, p. 3.

[15] Frederick Fico, "Influence of Perceived Editorial Concern and Role Concept on Source Reliance." Journalism Quarterly 63:322-330, 1984.

[16] This also points to a reexamination of source diversity studies that have found that government affiliated sources dominate news content. The stories analyzed in these studies should be reevaluated in terms of the episodic nature of the coverage of the issue(s) addressed.

[17] See Gitlin, The Whole World, Murdock, "Political Deviance," and Goldenberg, Making the Papers, for research supporting this conclusion.

[18] The NFO is considered a legitimate (and richly endowed) farm organization. It is now based in Ames, Iowa.